

RESTATEMENTS OF THE MORAL ARGUMENT FOR GOD

IN RECENT BRITISH THEISM

A Thesis

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PREFATORY NOTEPurpose and Scope  
of the Study.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the validity and importance of the moral argument for God in the light of a number of recent reformulations of the argument.

Its scope has been definitely limited, and those limits are indicated in the title. The body of the paper consists of a comparative appraisal of the theistic positions of four contemporary British thinkers. The enquiry has been confined, in the first place, to living writers (Professor Pringle-Pattison's death has occurred since the study was begun); there has thus been excluded from it the thought of Professor James Ward, Sir Henry Jones and a number of other recent philosophers who might well have found a place in a wider survey of recent literature. And it has been confined to theisms which make the significance of moral experience the center of their interest, thus excluding the contributions of Professor Oman, Dr. Tennant and several other contemporaries which could scarcely be classified as 'restatements of the moral argument'. Finally, the enquiry has been confined to British thinkers, thus eliminating from consideration Professor Titius of Berlin, Professor Hocking of Harvard and other living continental and American philosophers whose outlook



bears upon the topics of our discussion at a number of important points.

## II.

### Synopsis.

It is our aim to bring the study as far as possible into relation with living issues in the lives of contemporary Christians. For that reason, the enquiry opens with an attempt to discover the 'working' conception of God as it is likely to be held by a quite typical Christian layman of today. It is pointed out that that conception is likely to be unsatisfactory to its holder, inadequate for the richer experiences of personal religion, and untrue to historic Christian theism. It is suggested that the heart of the problem may be discovered in the fact that the 'plain man' no longer has the conviction of God's active and vital relationship to his life. A search for the causes of this inadequacy of contemporary theism traces it to the united impact of two influences--the one theoretical, the other practical--the mounting authority of science's interpretation of phenomenal experience and men's increasing scepticism of theories of ultimate reality, on the one hand; and, the practical effect of the rise of modern science upon the layman's life, on the other hand. In so far as our religious difficulties have a theoretical source, it sprang from the misguided severance of phenomenal and noumenal, 'facts' and 'values', which Kant bequeathed to the modern world. It is agreed to make the

theistic developments which followed from him the center of reference of the ensuing study. (Chapter One)

There follows an investigation of Kant's thought in its bearing upon theological advance. Certain basic inadequacies in his theory of knowledge and in his 'moral argument' for God are pointed out. And it is suggested that, in the problem as it emerged from Kant's hands and presented itself to his successors, there are to be discovered four main issues which may well serve as convenient connecting threads for the critical appraisals to follow. These are:-

1. The objectivity of values.
2. The relation of the 'realm of values' to the 'realm of Nature'.
3. The relations of moral values and other values; and their relative bearing upon the idea of God.
4. The problem of evil.

(Chapter Two)

An analysis of eight alternative forms in which the evidence for God from moral experience has been formulated since Kant's day concludes the introductory section and provides a transition to the body of the paper. (Chapter Three)

The theistic statements of Professors W.R. Sorley, A.E. Taylor, John Baillie and A.S. Pringle-Pattison are then examined in succession. While there is no attempt at rigid uniformity in treatment, each critique follows four steps:-

1. A brief introduction by way of orientation.
2. An outline paraphrase of the most important theistic work of the writer.

3. A somewhat longer expository section, further developing the author's position, usually in the light of the four normative questions and with fairly extensive quotations from the author's writings.
4. A brief concluding estimate.

(Chapters Four--Seven)

The paper concludes with an outline of a constructive theistic argument in which the points of contact with the four positions previously appraised are indicated; and with a statement of certain implications of the idea of God developed in the conclusion. (Chapter Eight)

### III.

Bibliography,  
etc.

The bibliography has been distributed through the thesis, the references for each chapter appearing at the end of the chapter. It has been carefully restricted to works actually used in the preparation of the paper.

The skeleton of the paper is so simple and obvious that any synopsis beyond the brief outline above has seemed superfluous.



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PART ONE

THE BACKGROUND OF CONTEMPORARY THEISM



## CHAPTER ONE

### THE SETTING OF THE ENQUIRY.

Clearly the major problems of contemporary religion center upon men's thought of God. And the heart of the matter, one is increasingly inclined to believe, concerns not the fact of God but the nature of God--not whether the modern man has a right to believe in God's existence, but what he may believe concerning God. More particularly, the focus of his difficulties concerns what we may name the "activity of God"--i.e. how he may think of God as actively and vitally related to our work-a-day life.

#### The passing of Humanism.

This statement may seem strange indeed in the face of the powerful vogue of the movement known as non-theistic Humanism; but it is made with the importance of that movement fully in view. For there are reasons to believe that Humanism as a serious intellectual challenge to theistic religion has already passed the peak of its influence. The evidence of its waning strength and the reasons for it need not detain us here<sup>1</sup>; suffice it to say that it becomes increasingly clear that Humanism was a distinctive feature of the abnormal years of the post-war decade. It now appears to have been a quite temporary though turbulent by-current in the main stream of theological development. Forces in the life of the times as well as a healthy recoil from the extreme religious scepticism of the period just closing are uniting to draw less elemen-

1. See "Trends in Contemporary Theism," in Religion in Life, Spring Number, 1932.

tary and more vital issues to the center of attention. If religious discussions of the past half dozen years have turned on the issue, "Is there a God?" ,it is our suggestion that the heart of controversy in the coming period will be directed to the question, "What is God like?"

## II.

### The Plain Man's Belief.

In this study, we shall necessarily be primarily concerned with the idea of God as it is met in the thought of philosophers and theologians--discussions quite beyond the reach if not beyond the interest of the average church-going Christian. But it is our purpose to keep the enquiry as far as possible in touch with the issues which are vital for the layman, and to test contemporary theistic statements from that perspective, i.e. in terms of their adequacy to meet the religious needs of the great body of Christians. For that reason it may be well, before setting forth on the main enquiry, to remind ourselves of the difficulties for belief in God as they are likely to present themselves to the quite typical layman, the "plain man" of our churches.<sup>2</sup>

Our first suggestion is that the plain man's major difficulty is not to be sure that he has a right to believe in God, but to have clear conviction what he may believe about the God whose existence he vaguely acknowledges. His quarrel with so-called modern thought

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2. The analysis which follows can purport to be no more than a reflection of the attitude of the laity in America; but I have the impression that it is perhaps a truer characterization of the belief of many laymen in Britain than has been widely recognized.

is not that it forbids belief in God, but that the Deity whom modern thought presents for our worship is quite inadequate for purposes of personal religion.

Let us turn our thought back half a century. Let us reflect upon the God in whom our fathers believed, the Deity made familiar to many of us in the faith of our parents and our childhood religious environment. He was a very definite and picturable Deity--one who could confidently, perhaps somewhat familiarly, be addressed as "Father", very much as one might ask counsel of a profoundly revered older advisor, above all one who heard personal petition and could be depended upon to answer it specifically and clearly. It was not expected that he would always change the course of Nature at one's behest. But he might certainly be expected to influence the health or thought of a friend. And, in every instance, he would give a definite reply which could be recognized as the Will of God in those circumstances.

Now turn to the plain man of today. Interrogate a typical layman about his working religious belief. Am I right that his replies to your inquiries, if quite honest, would run somewhat in this wise? Ask him whether he believes in God; he is quite likely to answer "Yes", though perhaps a trifle hesitantly, possibly supporting his affirmative reply with references to recent statements of eminent scientists of which he has heard at second hand and rather vaguely. Press your inquiry further and ask where he discovers God and what about God he knows with



certainty; almost surely he will speak of the likelihood of some ultimate power behind Nature; he will say that he sees God working through "natural law", and he may add a rather vague reference to "spiritual law" as well. But, on examination, "spiritual law" is conceived as operating after the impersonal and mechanical manner of physical law. Inquire whether he prays, what he believes about prayer. I hesitate to predict his reply. Perhaps falteringly he will admit that he sometimes prays. But if asked to develop his definite working convictions about prayer, its nature and power, is he not likely to be rather inarticulate? And, let it be remembered, men's working belief in prayer is, generally speaking, the most sensitive touchstone of vital personal religion.<sup>3</sup> One is reminded of the candid elder who when asked to describe his idea of God replied that God was to him a "vague oblong blur." For thousands and thousands of our laymen today God, if more than a "vague oblong blur", is at most a Principle of Order and Reason behind the world of Nature and the course of evolution. Here, as at so many points, Mr. Walter Lippmann has voiced the inarticulate view of a great body of the educated laity:--

"I do not mean that modern men have ceased to believe in God. I do mean that they no longer believe in him simply and literally. I mean that they have defined and refined their ideas of him until they can no longer honestly say that he exists as they would say that their neighbor exists. Search the writings of the liberal churchmen, and when you come to the crucial passages which are intended

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 3. "The God to whom men will not pray is only the ghost of God." Shailer Matthews, The Growth of the Idea of God, p.186.



to express their belief in God, you will find, I think, that at just this point their uncertainty is most evident." 4

Here the important point is not whether Mr. Lippmann's position is well or ill taken, it is that he is speaking for a very considerable proportion of his fellow laymen.

### III.

#### The Sickness of Liberal Religion.

We may find further evidence of the inadequacy of widely prevalent thought about God if we turn to the teaching of the liberal churches--the teaching from which the plain man is expected to form his religious ideas. By Liberalism is meant the progressive schools of thought which have sought to mediate between extreme Modernism on the one hand and Traditionalism verging on Fundamentalism on the other hand. Its central concern has been to bring theology thoroughly into harmony with the findings and spirit of modern science but without sacrifice of personal religious vitality and evangelical fervour. Its great crusade centered on winning acceptance for the modern view of the Bible and the scientific interpretation of the Universe. Its watchword has been the preservation of "abiding experiences in changing categories." It has been the interpretation of Christianity generally advanced in the universities and in the larger metropolitan churches in both Great Britain and the United States during the first quarter of the Twentieth Century.

In passing it may be noted that there is no more significant feature of the contemporary religious mood

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4. Walter Lippmann, A Preface to Morals, p.21.

than the growing dissatisfaction with liberal theology. This would seem to be the negative parallel to the growing interest in the Theology of Crisis and other forms of "supernaturalism" on the other hand. Wherever ministers meet together there are references to the sickness of Liberalism, its failure to stem the ebbing tide of religious loyalty among educated people, its patent inadequacy for a moment like the present. There is increasing agreement that Liberalism has served its mission but is now outmoded.

The most serious charge against the theology of the liberal churches in the past quarter century is that, with sincere motives, it has betrayed the cause of true religion. In seeking to save religious belief from annihilation by the accepted thought-forms of the secular world, it has itself become a palid reflection of the secular philosophy. It has tacitly accepted for religion the status of one of the incidental concerns of life. "Religion has become an elective in the university of life." It has more and more preached what might be called a "minimum interpretation of religion". Increasingly it has spoken of "religion" rather than Christianity; of religion without explicit reference to the necessity and certainty of God, but rather as a "way of life" or "philosophy of life"; of Jesus as the best of men; of prayer as synonymous with worship or aspiration. In its solicitude to

domesticate religion within the fabric of modern thought, religion has become hardly distinguishable from ethics, worship from aesthetic experience, the religious life from the noblest secular life.

Of even more serious consequence has been the favorite logic of liberal apologetic. Taking its method from what it understood to be accepted scientific procedure, its approach to the idea of God has been by way of tedious and methodical inductive argument. Its effort has been to free the mind from all prior convictions and biases, assemble all available data, and erect a logical proof for God. This method has several serious weaknesses. For one thing, the average lay thinker seldom has either the equipment or the perseverance to pursue his quest to its goal. More serious, even in the hands of a skilled apologist, it seldom leads to the God of religion; it usually yields at best a tentative intellectual postulate of the probable existence of God. But its greatest weakness is not that an argument for God cannot be successfully developed by that procedure; quite probably it can. Its most serious shortcoming is that it sets the whole enterprise of apologetic in a false perspective. It puts the cart before the horse. God becomes the last term of an arduous and technical intellectual inquiry instead of the first fact of a vital religious experience.



The God ofLiberal Theology.

The heart of the matter is that the average layman of today has no clear conception of the activity of God, no thought of how God makes personal contact with men one by one, no conviction of a truly living God. Let us pursue this point a trifle more thoroughly. For living religion is primarily concerned with the matter of God's vital relation to the individual human spirit and human interests. Its primary query is not so much, "What is God like?" as "What does God do?" And of all the questions to which current liberal theism returns an inconclusive answer, this is at once the most important in the asking and the most foggy in the reply given.

Take the conception of revelation. Men talk much of God "revealing himself" through the processes of Nature, through evolution, through moral law, through conscience. What is really meant is that "God is revealed" in these ways. At first hearing the distinction sounds like a verbal quibble, but there is a long mile of practical difference for religious experience between these two conceptions. That there are evidences of Deity behind much of the phenomena of Nature and the evolution of the moral consciousness is certain enough. But that is essentially a passive conception of revelation; it refers to a discovery by man, a discovery made as he might discover a new star or a beautiful view or an eternal but



hitherto unknown physical law. That we can say with assurance that God actively and purposefully reveals himself through these same phenomena is quite another matter. That is an active conception. And that is the heart of what the church historically has meant by revelation. It is one thing to view a canvass or a bust and exclaim, "Ah, I see the indications of artistic genius; there is indeed the revelation of a true artist." It is quite another thing to stand with hushed spirit while one watches a great artist at the creation of a masterpiece. It is one thing to see the portrait of a hero of the past and to know that one is looking at the face of great character. It is quite different to feel a strong hand upon one's shoulder, to hear a reassuring voice in one's ear, to feel another's breath upon one's face, to know the person as comrade and friend.

The story is told of a young man who recently returned home after a somewhat long absence. As his key turned the latch and he entered the front door, he was greeted by silence. He climbed slowly to the second floor room where, day by day and year by year, he had been accustomed to be met by a familiar figure and a familiar voice in greeting. Everything in that room was precisely as he had expected to find it. There on the table were the books and magazines piled in a distinctive and familiar fashion. On the desk was a vase of flowers,

its arrangement suggesting fingers with a peculiarly artistic touch. Each chair and ornament was in its accustomed place. There was almost a distinctive aroma in the room. In one corner was the familiar great arm-chair where the familiar figure habitually sat, and beside it some needlework as though just laid down. It was all Everything in the room was a 'revelation' of his mother. exactly as he had expected. But--the chair was empty; there was no hearty voice in greeting; the figure was not there. Something like that is the contrast between a God "revealed" through Nature and conscience, and a God who wills to reveal himself to individuals, speaking to men one by one.

Again, consider present-day interpretations of the Holy Spirit. There was a period in the years immediately before the War when one seldom heard sermons upon the Holy Spirit. Once again it has become quite the fashion to speak freely of the Spirit--the indwelling Monitor, the voice of God in the heart of every man. Contemporary rendering of the Holy Spirit tends to mean little more than a pious designation for what men have always known as conscience. That is a far remove from the Holy Spirit as apostolic Christianity knew Him and as He has been experienced in periods of the church's greatest spiritual vitality. The Holy Spirit of today is simply God immanent in every human heart, "a bit of the being of the Divine lodged in our natures from all eternity." But the Holy

Spirit of the early church was less truly thought of as God immanent than as God transcendent. It was not a spark of the Divine implanted in human nature from creation; but rather a special and direct message from God at particular times to particular individual believers. It was a "gift from on high." The Holy Spirit of today has been not unfairly described as a "hazy humanized evidence of a God whose activity is seen vaguely everywhere but clearly nowhere"; the Holy Spirit of the ages was the unmistakeably direct impact of a God whose initiative was the most vital factor in Christian experience. And so it is small wonder that men no longer feel the certainty of God's love and power and guidance in their lives.

Once more, with this change in men's thoughts of revelation and inspiration has come a modification in their conception of the Will of God for their lives. The Will of God to our fathers was the personal, direct, individual purpose of a Loving Father for each child, personally made known and personally appropriated. Today the Will of God tends to mean to the average layman that general answer to a particular situation which, all things considered, best fits the circumstances. It is man's judgment of the best thing to do, slightly sanctified by pious reference to Deity.

Finally, consider the matter of prayer. And we



remind ourselves again that a people's prayer-life is usually the most accurate thermometer of the reality of their religion. It needs no proof that men have largely lost the traditional Christian faith in prayer, and have largely given over the traditional Christian practice of personal prayer. To be sure they still believe it a good thing to pray. It puts them into touch with the great spiritual forces of the Universe. It quiets and steadies their lives. It opens their minds to the direction of the divine spirit--that spirit making itself felt through the accumulated spiritual heritage of the race and through conscience. But if they are asked what specifically prayer may be expected to accomplish beyond their own lives, or whence comes its beneficent influence other than through impersonal natural forces, they do not know. Prayer is no longer the intimate commerce of two personal spirits through which the world's most potent work is done.

## V.

The Core of  
the Problem.

We have put the matter bluntly, and rather extremely. Quite probably we have overstated the case. Moreover there were aspects of traditional Christian belief strongly tainted with superstition which are good riddance. And we have drawn the contrast as though the new represented wholly loss; in reality it has brought much decided gain. The main purpose has been to face

the working beliefs of the plain man of our day. And the burden of the contrast--the inadequacy of the idea of God as it is actually held by great numbers of our laymen (as well as its sharp divergence from the richest convictions of Christian theism)--would seem to hold. The plain truth is that we are less sure of the activity of God than of that of our nearest neighbour. Practically, we ascribe less individuality, less initiative, less creative purposeful action to God than to our bootblack or the postman on our route. It is true that many are inclined to believe that God does act beyond the fixed and predetermined order of Nature. But where, when, how? They do not know. Many are inclined to think that prayer accomplishes more than helpful subjective inspiration for those who pray. But when, what, how? They are not sure. God being everywhere in general is thought of as nowhere in particular. Men, feeling the threat of imprisonment within the shackles of deterministic psychology have shaken loose from that bondage, refused to acknowledge that concepts of law could adequately account for personality, and have demanded the reality of human freedom. What they have demanded for themselves they have not demanded for their God. They profess belief in a God who is free, who acts. But they cannot suggest where or how he acts. And, not knowing where he acts, they might almost as well disbelieve in his activity

altogether. A machine which is built to run but remains ever idle soon becomes unfit to run. How much more, a God who is claimed to exercise personal activity but is never known to do so cannot long remain as a vital reality in men's lives, the living God of the Christian faith. This would seem to be the pith of the warning in the predicament of contemporary liberal religion--unless it can recover a reasoned conviction of the dynamic agency of God in individual experience, God as a power in human faith will disappear.

## VI.

The Roots of  
the Plain Man's  
Difficulties.

An adequate account of the sources of the situation just sketched would demand a survey of the thought and life of the past two centuries and carry us far beyond the proper limits of this paper. The factors which have influenced the determination of modern thought are legion; their inter-relation and mutual fructification constitute an enigma for the most acute historical criticism.<sup>5</sup> But of these formative influences, two are so much the most important as to warrant special classification, and it is to these two that our attention must be confined. Indeed it is fair to say that most of the other important factors are directly or indirectly traceable to them.

On the whole these two forces took their rise in quite different sources. But they have converged to exert a single impact upon modern thinking. Indeed they have proven to be extraordinarily effective teammates; they

5. See, for example, J.H. Randall Jr., The Making of the Mind.  
Modern



have played into each other's hands like trained acrobats. The one factor was largely theoretical; it began as a temper of mind. The other was predominantly practical; it came as a temper of life. The first is the critical, sceptical philosophy which was born of the thought of Immanuel Kant, was furthered by the rise of a scientific philosophy, and has dominated increasingly the serious reflection of the Nineteenth Century. The other is the character of modern life, the actual mechanised fabric of daily living as modern science has made it possible for us. The first has won a growing ascendancy over men's thinking; the other has increasingly determined men's living. The roots of our present situation are, then, mainly two--the one theoretical, the other practical; the one in the dominant thought-currents of the past century, the other in the kind of civilization which modern man has built for himself.

The purpose of the present enquiry is to examine the first of these factors in some detail. But before undertaking it in earnest, it will be worth while to turn aside for a brief moment to scrutinize the actual effects of its companion influence, modern science, upon the plain man.

## VII.

### The Impact of Science upon the Plain Man's Thought.

The early findings of modern science and the earliest notable "scientific philosophy" in the writings of Newton were among the three or four most important influences which awoke Kant from his "dogmatic slumber" and set his energies to the development of the "critical philosophy".

6. See below, p. 29.

Its unhappy results in this particular will concern us not a little in the sequel and we shall venture to propose the most hopeful method of their correction.<sup>7</sup> But it is not the impact of scientific theory upon the speculation of the period which interests us at the moment, but the far more immediate and direct effect of scientific ideas and scientific achievements upon the religious outlook of the ordinary citizen. That influence was exerted, again, in two ways--upon his work-a-day attitudes and upon his work-a-day practice; and by both avenues it made its entrance into his life very largely without his conscious awareness of what was happening to him.

It is a commonplace among serious students of the history of thought that modern science introduced almost no startlingly new problems for religion, problems which had not been recognised and acutely sensed by the wisest of the Greeks or made the object of philosophical reflection through the centuries. No, the immense influence of science in the Nineteenth Century was due to the fact that then, for the first time in human history, the "scientific outlook" became the possession, one might almost say the instinctive assumption, of the common man. As Whitehead so clearly points out, there have been men in every age of civilized thought who have been characterised by the scientific outlook--the passion for facts linked to a suspicion of metaphysical speculation which mark the scientific temper of mind. But they have been solitary figures, confined to the cloistered chambers of academic privilege, for the most part. And their influence, although

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7. See below, pp. 358ff.

ultimately far-reaching, has been largely indirect. The average citizen has gone his habitual way, accepting his world and his religion uncritically, with naive faith. In the Nineteenth Century all this was changed. The fundamental "temper of mind" which heretofore had been the prerogative of the few now became the characteristic of the many. "A new mentality was disclosed."<sup>8</sup>

It is not always realised precisely how the gradual and largely unconscious induction of the common man into the "scientific outlook" has affected his work-a-day thinking. I would suggest that it has made its impact primarily at six points:-

1. Through the new universe opened to the contemplation of the plain man by modern science--i.e. through the actual facts of scientific discovery. To be sure, as has so often been pointed out, science has merely 'pushed back' frontiers which to the mind of pre-scientific thinkers were already pictured in terms of quite incredible magnitudes. Indeed, it is quite probable that the universe as Sir James Jeans describes it to us in which our planet is a minor satellite of one of the smaller stars which, itself, is as one grain of sand among all the sands on all the seashores of the world, it is quite probable that that universe is no more overpowering in its immensities, no more inconceivable in its intricacies, than was the heaven of Orion and the Pleiades which stirred the Hebrew psalmist to awe if we bear in mind the comparative maturity and intellectual

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 8. A.N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, p. 122.



comprehension of the educated minds of the two periods. But, again, it is now the common man who is introduced to the findings of the learned and feels his mind aghast before his world as science portrays it. The result, undeniably, is a tendency toward mental confusion and bafflement. At the least, an impassable gulf seems fixed between whatever Power may control so vast a cosmos and his puny life and petty concerns. At the worst, he discovers his mind taking refuge in a humble and settled agnosticism. We are not here concerned to admit that this outcome represents a superficial analysis on the plain man's part. We are concerned to point out that this is the outcome.

2. Through the tendency of the scientific point-of-view to interpret everything as in the process of becoming. More specifically, through the scientific concept of evolution. Evolution has had a twofold and strangely paradoxical effect upon ordinary thought. It has created the impression of an 'unfinished universe', of the world as still somehow 'in the making'; in this aspect it has fixed men's anticipations upon the future which is yet to become, has raised the most important single difficulty for the traditional Christian interpretation of the significance of Jesus, and has encouraged the speculation that God himself may also be somehow still 'in the making'.<sup>9</sup> In an unfinished universe where almost anything may yet happen, the common man finds the conception of an Eternal and Unchanging God both difficult and undesirable. On the other hand, evolution has also stressed the all-

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 9. This strange view has, of course, had serious support from Professor Alexander and, apparently, from Professor Bergson in some of his writings.

controlling influence of origins; in this aspect, it has fixed men's attention upon the past, has tended to falsify historic perspective, and has encouraged the effort to explain mature phenomena wholly by reference to their crude beginnings. It is sufficient commentary upon the confused state of the common man's thought to note that these two tendencies proceeding from a single source are antipodal and quite irreconcilable, but they will not infrequently be discovered comfortably domesticated within one mind's working philosophy.

3. Through the favorite scientific rubric of interpretation--the concept of law. Science's supreme objective has been the unification of all reality by inclusion within a single all-embracing system, the uniform interpretation of all reality in terms of a single all-sufficient principle of explanation--the principal of universal law. How absurd have been the consequent distortions of the facts of reality may be indicated in a single illustration. In opening his admirable discussion of The New Psychology, Mr. A.G. Tansley points out that, if he is to develop a 'science of mind', it is absolutely necessary for him to assume the reality of psychological determinism. And he gladly accepts the assumption and builds his account of mind upon it. Further, he suggests that this is the invariable procedure in sound psychology. In other words, a science which by definition should be a systematic account of facts finds it necessary to read into its premisses a theory which, as science, it is its duty to weigh and pass judgment upon. And, in the case in

point, a theory which happens to be decisively negatived by the testimony of naive experience and by any unforced reading of the facts to be interpreted. To be sure, this is the surrender of a sound ideal of science, but it has been prevalent scientific procedure. And it has made its imprint upon the plain man's thought. It has overstressed continuity of development to the neglect of novelty, change and advance; it has exaggerated uniformities and slighted originality and individuality; most important, it has led men to conceive of the operation of one type of reality in its relations with another entirely in terms of law, i.e. in an analogy borrowed from the impersonal and formal procedure of human justice or, more appropriately, from the mechanical and sterile behavior of the inanimate world. In religion, the result has been the depersonalisation and devitalisation of men's working thought of God which we have already deprecated.<sup>10</sup> And we shall have occasion to suggest later that the initial step toward the recovery of an experience of a living God is to free the mind from the strangling influences of this false assumption of uniformity.<sup>11</sup>

4. Closely parallel, through the premium which science has tended to place upon a certain class of truths arrived at in a certain way. This is the 'scientific method' in the strict sense. The method is that of analysis, description, classification, generalisation--the familiar technique of laboratory science. The kind of truth supremely prized

10. See above, pp. 4 ff.

11. See below, pp. 377 ff.



is that which can be caught within the meshes of this particular net--those facts which admit of complete analysis and description and which submit to adequate classification as instances of a generalised type. Indeed, so authoritative have become these scientific norms that the common man tends to accept as proven 'truth' only those facts which satisfy their standards. It has not been sufficiently noted that, by these tests, there are excluded from the province of 'truth' not merely the more profound convictions of religion but, equally, the most cherished insights and concerns of the artist and the poet. In its century-long battle against this particular presupposition of the scientific outlook, religion has not fought alone; its interests in the matter have been no less the interests of the poets, the artists, the lovers, and the devotees of every other area of human experience where supreme value attaches to richness and depth, to originality and individuality.<sup>12</sup>

5. Through the scientific standards of truth. Here we meet the positive and invaluable contribution of modern science to the common man's outlook. And it embodies a challenge to religion which religion has been altogether too slow to acknowledge and meet. Ask the average younger 'plain man' of today what it is which most attracts him in the great non-religious or anti-religious popular philosophies of the moment; he will reply it is their dogged determination to face facts, their unswerving loyalty to truth at whatever cost to wish or hope or dream, the

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12. See Prof. Whitehead's vigorous and illuminating development of this point in Science and the Modern World, Chpt. V.

modesty of their claims to knowledge, their preference for understatement rather than overstatement. Ask the same fair-minded critic of religion the heart of his criticism; if quite honest, his reply will run somewhat as follows:- The principal vice of religion is its subtle intellectual dishonesty and practical self-deception; it mistakes probabilities for certainties, beautiful hopes for stern realities, noble intentions for actual achievements; it thinks that it has accomplished great results simply because it has the emotional feeling of great strength; it ~~ca~~claims to be on the path to high achievement simply because it makes profession of lofty goals; it is sincere but pitifully self-deceived, earnest but rather futile. It must be a self-assured religious apologist, indeed, who can stand up under such a penetrating indictment without a sense of shame and earnest searching of heart. Possibly the most valuable single gift of modern science to our thought-life is a merciless insistence upon thorough-going intellectual honesty, and 'the agnosticism of a healthy humility'.

6. Through its instrumental function in the creation of the modern world, i.e. through scientific civilization. Here we pass to the other aspect of the matter--the influence of science upon the common man's work-a-day practice.

#### VIII.

The Impact of Science upon the Plain Man's Life. It is not at all in the realm of his conscious philosophy that we confront the most disastrous as it is also the most far-reaching effect of the rise of modern science upon the common man's religious faith; but in the area

of his most familiar daily experience, through the fabric of modern industrial civilization. The consequences for the life of religion should be fully grasped and felt by anyone who would adequately deal with the religious problem of our day.

Modern scientific civilization has tended to shut men off from living contact with his natural parent, the world of Nature--its immensities, its grandeurs, its austere indifference to him and his petty achievements, its beauties, its benefactions, its facination. No longer can the 'starry heavens above' give their message to him. It has walled him within the artificial confines of his machine-dominated life, and fostered in him an illusory security. It has herded him into vast impersonal and inhuman aggregates of swarming humanity where he is debarred not merely from contact with Nature but from <sup>the</sup>normal amenities of friendly association with his fellow-men. It has concentrated his attention upon the amassing of things, the multiplication of accouterments, the perfecting of appliances and conveniences. It has persuaded him that plumbing is more important than poetry, facts than understanding, the latest than the best, standardization than individuality, quantity than creativity, success than life. Its net result has been very largely to dull the spirit of modern man to sensitivity to religious reality, and to dissolve from his life the sense of need for religious certainty.

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13. For a masterly discussion of the practical effects of modern civilization upon the cause of religion, see, especially, Reinhold Niebuhr, Does Civilization Need Religion?



## IX.

Summary.

We have said that the predicament of contemporary theism is to be traced principally to the joint impact of two forces--the dominant philosophical outlook of the past century and a half, and the practical consequences of the ascendancy of science. In origin, these two movements were partly akin, partly different. In their development, they have pursued widely divergent courses, though from the outset their mutual interpenetration has been very great. In their final influence upon the religious life of our day, they were one; that influence has been toward the discrediting of the knowability of ultimate reality, and the rigid restriction of philosophy's and theology's proper materials to the unchallengable data of obvious experience. Contemporary uncertainty in religion was born of the critical, sceptical philosophy which Kant thrust onto the modern world; it has been suckled in the ease and worldliness of modern life. Men's minds were already tinged with scepticism about the validity of metaphysical speculation; now they found their energies and interests drawn irresistibly into practical concerns where speculation seemed irrelevant and unreal. Increasingly considerations of 'ultimate reality' became foreign to their normal habits of thought which were intensely preoccupied with the manipulation of immediate reality--the stuff of this world and the march of passing events, concerning which it was superfluous to speculate. Did they not have all needed

material for their philosophy within their immediate grasp? Modern scepticism began in theoretical uncertainty; it has been furthered by a practical non-concern.

The scope of this study requires us to limit our attention rigorously to the first of these two great formative influences; and to that enquiry we must now turn. But we shall view our problem in an utterly false perspective and miss altogether the larger significance of the modern scene unless we have clearly in view that other and companion factor which paralleled and so largely stimulated the development of thought. For in the larger view, it is very doubtful which of the two has actually had more important consequences for the destiny of religion in our time.

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CHAPTER TWOKANT'S STATEMENT OF THE MORAL ARGUMENT.The Importance  
of Kant.

It is a truism that any discussion of modern thought, whether philosophical or theological, must make its start with Kant. Not merely does the Critique of Pure Reason stand without parallel in the literature of modern philosophy--indeed, beyond challenge, the most important work in the realm of thought since Aristotle. The main outlines of his position, for good or for ill or for both, have provided the issues for the intellectual battles since his day and determined the limits within which those battles have been fought. To understand the mind of Kant is to begin to feel at home among the intellectual struggles of the Nineteenth Century.

For the purposes of this paper, there is no need to enter into a description of the strange little German scholar whose travels in a long life of eighty years never carried him more than fifty miles from his native town of Königsberg, whose mechanically ordered life was so methodical that his fellow-citizens were said to set their watches as he passed on his daily afternoon stroll, whose sole intimate companion was the faithful servant Lampe who, in Heine's overworked description, used to follow him on rainy days with an umbrella "like a figure of Providence. Nor can we pause to outline the immediate background of the Kantian philosophy--the forces which seem to have been

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1. Werke, ed. Lachmann, III, 80f.; quoted, amongst others, by  
W. V. Quine, Persistent Problems of Philosophy, p. 533.

majorly instrumental in moulding his thought--though they are, in the view of the present writer, even more important than in the cases of most philosophers and considerably more important than many Kantian commentators have recognized. Suffice it to say that those conditioning factors were mainly four:--

a. Kant's home, with its simple, intense, highly emotional pietism. Its final influence upon him appears to have been twofold:--a deep-rooted distrust of emotion in religion and a rather parochial indifference to the importance of religious institutions on the one hand; a profound ethical consciousness and sense for true personal character on the other hand.

b. The Rationalism of Leibniz and Wolff--the immediate training ground of Kant's philosophical views

c. The joint impact of the scepticism of Hume and the scientific principles of Newton. Despite their contrast, these two forces are mentioned together; for the former shattered Kant's confidence in the validity of the philosophical tradition in which he had been schooled while the latter attracted him as a dependable substitute. Hume cast doubt upon the whole Rationalistic approach; the thought of Newton suggested, as an alternative to Rationalism, the method of science as the most valid road to truth.

d. Rousseau. While Rousseau's influence was of distinctly subordinate importance for our enquiry, it is of first importance for an understanding of the man Kant.

Again we cannot attempt a detailed account of Kant's philosophy, especially those very important features of it which occupy the greater part of the Critique of Pure Reason. We must confine attention strictly to those elements of the teaching which have most influenced the development of theistic thought since Kant's day. Of these two are of primary importance--Kant's familiar dichotomy, foundational for the critical philosophy, between the realm of the noumenal and the realm of the phenomenal and Kant's positive argument for God, the so-called moral argument.

## II.

### Appearance and Reality.

As already suggested, Kant's handling of the problem of knowledge was determined by an extension of the Humian scepticism on the one hand, and by an acceptance of the Newtonian norms of scientific knowledge on the other hand. It was developed through a more acute analysis of the process of knowing and of the nature of consciousness than Hume had undertaken. Its outcome was to limit the province of possible "knowledge" strictly to appearances; and to set over against the domain of knowledge the whole of ultimate reality as intrinsically and finally unknowable. The argument is, of course, an involved and at points exceedingly difficult one. It may be briefly summarized as follows, having in view primarily its bearing on the problem of theism.

The starting-point is the common-sense recognition that reality comes to consciousness only through the screen of our mental apparatus; it is understood only in the



framework and under the terms set by that apparatus; such knowledge as we may possess of it is forever colored, we might say tainted, by the constitution of our minds. Hume had cast doubt upon the validity of the causal axiom. But Kant, roused from his "dogmatic (i.e. Rationalistic) slumber" by Hume's inquiries, saw clearly that the questions his predecessor had raised with regard to the limited problem of causality should be pressed with equal force against the whole process by which the mind acquires what it regards as knowledge. The principles of knowledge, the conditions in terms of which reality invariably presents itself for our study, are discovered to be principles within the mind. Of their existence apart from the knowing mind, i.e. in reality itself, we may never have certitude. Of the true character of that reality, our understanding must always be inferential; it may never possess the authority of "knowledge" as such. In Professor Kemp Smith's putting of the point:--"The principles which lie at the basis of our knowledge are.....conditions of sense-experience, and that means of our knowledge of appearances, never legitimately applicable to the deciphering of ultimate reality. They are valid within the realm of experience, useless for the construction of a metaphysical theory of things in themselves." "Knowledge" of a kind we do have. It is the mind's organization of the great wealth of material presented for its contemplation and analysis, the whole body of appearances. Such knowledge science aims to -----

provide. (It should be born in mind, of course, that Kant restricts the legitimate province of scientific inquiry even more severely. Not only does science deal merely with appearances. Properly, it deals with the material of sense-experience only; indeed, only with that part of sense-experience which submits to handling by mathematical-physical categories. For that was the only science which Kant could recognize as valid.<sup>3</sup> Here we meet the most serious limitation imposed upon his thought by an uncritical acceptance of the Newtonian norms of proper scientific procedure--a limitation with important consequences not merely for his own theory but also for the stream of thought which flowed from the critical philosophy.)

The final corollary of the distinction between the noumenal and the phenomenal carries us into Kant's constructive position. Since we are forever debarred from "knowledge" of ultimate reality, our working relationship to reality must be in terms of some other attitude than that of "knowledge." Kant defines that attitude as "faith." There is probably no more fecund source of misconception in the whole critical philosophy than Kant's employment of the two contrasted terms, knowledge and faith. To neither does he give the meaning which our familiar parlance attaches to them. As already noted, knowledge is confined in Kant's usage to the interpretation of a limited kind of sense experience, such sense experience as can be handled by scientific methods; yes, ----

3. Kemp Smith, Commentary, p. lv develops the same point.



such ~~sense~~-experience as can be handled by a particular type of science--the mathematical-physical sciences. From the scope of knowledge there is thus excluded by definition all aesthetic, all religious, all distinctively personal and individual experiences, even all the data of the organic realm; in brief, the major part of what constitutes significant human living. After the same fashion, faith is employed by Kant with a far wider range of meaning than in colloquial speech. It is a far remove from the Sunday School lad's definition of faith as "believing what you know aint true". Nor is it synonymous with what the New Testament frequently means by faith--the willingness of the human spirit to hazard itself on beliefs felt to be true though never fully proven true.<sup>4</sup> Kant's own definition is not clear:-

"Belief in matters of faith is a belief in a pure practical point of view, i.e. a moral faith, which proves nothing for the theoretical, pure, rational cognition, but only for that which is practical and directed to the fulfillment of its duties.....

"It is a trust in the promise of the moral law; not, however, such as is contained in it, but such as I put into it, and that on morally adequate grounds." 5

It would be a somewhat free but perhaps not unfair rendering of his meaning to suggest that to Kant faith is my practical work-a-day relationship to things and people which validates itself in experience but which can never be verified with mathematical finality. Since I am forever debarred from knowledge not merely of transcendental reality but also of all distinctively human experiences, these latter

4. Cp. Hebrews 11:8; 13; etc.

5. Critique of Judgment, W.v, pp. 369-72; Bernard's translation, pp. 407-10; quoted in Kemp Smith, Commentary, p. 576.



must also be included within the operation of faith. With regard to character, for instance, I can have no knowledge strictly speaking but must act on faith. That a person is, I may feel sure; but what he is I can never know. Faith embraces the working assumptions I employ every time I have a relationship to a value-consideration. Thus all the really important considerations of practical life fall within its province, my certainty of my own freedom as well as my assurance of God. Of the truth of faith's content I may have verification in experience, but such a pragmatic test can never be employed for its theoretical establishment.

With a critique of Kant's fundamental premise--the dichotomy of appearance and reality--we are not here concerned. Such a critique, in addition to its main task of examining the epistemological and metaphysical validity of the position, should aim to display vividly some of the misconceptions of Kant's doctrine which have been widely held in the popular mind and which have done much to curse thought in the period since. For example, the distinction between Kant's Phenomenalism and Subjectivism should be clearly developed.<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge as I have is in no sense to be interpreted merely as subjective impressions or ideas in my own mind. You and I live in the same phenomenal world, what may be called the public world of phenomenal experience. It is of this public phenomenal world that science furnishes an interpretation. Further, the meaning which Kant habitually gives to the two key words, knowledge and faith, and -----

6. In this connection see Kemp Smith, Commentary, pp. xlv ff.

the discrepancy between that meaning and our familiar usage should be pointed out as we have tried to do above. Finally it should be emphasized that Kant's restriction of "knowledge" to appearances is not as serious a stricture as might at first be supposed, since it is precisely in the world of phenomena that we actually live--the world which science is equipped to interpret.

More important from the point of view of our study is the general effect which this basic premiss of the critical philosophy has had upon the development of theological thought. Kant's phrasing of it has suffered serious reformulation since his day, and, as we shall try to show in the sequel <sup>7</sup>, with consequences which might have been abhorrent to his own mind. It has traced a development which he little anticipated and, quite probably, would have deplored. We recall that Kant's professed purpose in developing the critical philosophy was "to abolish knowledge <sup>8</sup> in order to make room for faith." The outcome has been, I believe, almost exactly the reverse of Kant's intention. That part of human thought to which he gave the high word "knowledge"--the elements in experience fit for scientific treatment--has won increasing reverence as the only proper material of philosophical speculation; and its interpreter, science, has received increasing recognition as the alone safe guide to truth. While that part of experience to which, in Kant's view, faith alone could give entrance has been accorded diminishing metaphysical significance; and our guide thereto, faith, has become increasingly suspect, tainted

<sup>7</sup>. See, below, p. 66.  
<sup>8</sup>. Critique of Pure Reason, B xxx.

with the opprobrium of "wishful thinking." At least, this has been the outcome in wide circles of thought, especially among those untrained philosophically.<sup>8a</sup> For the net deposit from Kant's dichotomy seems to have been twofold:-- the conviction that the nature of ultimate reality is forever unknowable; the impression that it is to science that we are to look for such dependable knowledge as it lies within man's power to attain.

### III.

#### Kant's Idea of God.

It is no easy task to furnish an adequate outline of Kant's views on the problem of God in brief compass. And for the very good reason that the question, "What did Kant believe about God?" must always depend for its answer upon the reply to a prior question, "At what period do you mean?" There is probably no single problem in his whole philosophy on which he was more inconsistent. Throughout the long period of fifty years of speculative writing, his views were constantly changing and not in one fixed direction. Indeed quite contradictory opinions on theistic issues are to be found not merely as between the writings of different periods but among works of practically the same stage of thought, indeed within the same book. It has long been recognized that Kant's greatest work, the first Critique, presents a problem of disentangling various strata of thought not unlike that of the criticism of the Pentateuch. The student of his idea of God faces similar difficulties.

Indded, I am inclined to think that, by a judicious  
8a. Cp. the almost identical judgment of Pringle-Pattison in  
The Idea of God, pp. 47ff., espec. p. 49.



selection of individual passages, a case could be made for Kant's support of almost every type of theistic idea. His early concern was to preserve the unquestioned transcendence of God, in sympathy with the prevalent Deism of the time; <sup>9</sup> elements in his later thought are hardly to be distinguished from pantheism <sup>10</sup>. Certainly the stress falls almost wholly on God's immanence <sup>11</sup>. In most of his writings there can be no question of his certainty of the objectivity of God; but there are passages, not one but several, which seem to imply that God is nothing more than a thought within my own mind or an aspect of my own experience--passages from which the whole subjectivist-humanist trend might well claim parentage <sup>12</sup>. An early treatise bore the title "The Only Possible Proof of the Being of God" <sup>13</sup>; one of the most vehement sections of the first Critique purposes to dismiss that "proof" finally as without standing ground in the court of reason <sup>14</sup>.

9. See, for example, Critique of Pure Reason, A 613-B 641:--

"We cannot put aside, and yet also cannot endure the thought, that a being, which we represent to ourselves as supreme amongst all possible beings, should, as it were, say to itself, 'I am from eternity to eternity, and outside me there is nothing save what is through my will; but whence am I?'.... The transcendental object lying at the base of appearances.. is and remains for us inscrutable."

Also citations in Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, p. 49f.

10. Opus Postumum (ed. Adickes), p. 819 etc. "God is not a Being outside of me, but merely a thought within me.. One God, in me, around me, and above me."

Also, Critique of Pure Reason, A 699-B 727:-- "It must be a matter of complete indifference to us.. whether we say that God in his wisdom has willed it to be so, or that nature has wisely arranged it thus."

11. *Op. cit.*

12. Opus Postumum, pp. 819, 824, etc.:-- "There is a Being within me.....; and I as man am myself this being, and it is no substance external to me." "God is thus no substance discoverable outside of me but merely a moral relation within me." (p. 826).

13. Published 1763. 14. A 592-B 620 ff.

It is well known that the evidence of design in Nature early gripped his imagination and that his mind never completely freed itself from the power of this evidence<sup>15</sup>; but that he rejected the teleological argument along with the ontological and cosmological arguments in his most critical writings<sup>16</sup>. Indeed the patent inconsistency on the significance of order in Nature is perhaps the most familiar instance of contradictions within the fabric of the first Critique. Again, with regard to the personality of God, "in Kant's own earlier writings we shall look in vain for an ascription of Personality to God; but in the Opus Postumum it constantly recurs."<sup>17</sup> Professor Webb has suggested that this is all the more noteworthy because of the very rare use of "person" and "personality" in referring to God until well toward the close of the Eighteenth Century<sup>18</sup>. That Kant did, in his later years, steadily conceive of God as a Person cannot be doubted<sup>19</sup> although it is by no means so clear that he posits that Person as more

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15. See, for example, The General Natural History and Theory of the Heavens, published in 1755.  
Critique of Pure Reason, A 623-B 651, etc.
  16. Critique of Pure Reason, A 621- B 649 ff.  
See also the passages of the Opus Postumum cited by Professor Webb in his discussion of this point, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, pp. 186-194. There is strong evidence that in these latest writings Kant again recoiled from linking God in any way with Nature. Webb seems to me to underrate the significance of these passages. They seem to me further evidence of Kant's tendency to identify God, in his final thought, with elements within conscience only.
  17. Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, p. 182.
  18. Webb, God and Personality, p. 62f.
  19. Opus Postumum, p. 776:-- "The thought of God is at the same time belief in him and in his personality."  
Op. cit., p. 828:-- "God is a power commanding us through a Categorical Imperative without reference to our happiness; a real Person, but certainly not one perceptible as an object of the senses."



than an element within the individual human consciousness. And even on this point his mind wavered according to Adickes who says that in one place at least he seems to expressly deny that personality may be attributed to God <sup>20</sup>

Finally, on the most important question of all-- whether Kant really believed in the existence of an objective cosmic Deity, existent in his own right and wholly apart from human concepts of him--the student is left in not a little uncertainty. There is possibly sufficient evidence to support the contention of most of his recent interpreters (notably Professor Webb and Dr. England) that to the close of his long life Kant held firmly to the conviction which was certainly a corner-stone of his earlier thinking, the Objective reality of God. Passages in the earlier works, even including the three Critiques, which seem to render any other interpretation impossible are too numerous to permit citation. But even in them and, far more vividly in the Opus Postumum, there are enough suggestions of the contrary conviction to lend a semblance of credibility to Heine's famous jibe that Kant had re-introduced God after effectually banishing him from reasonable philosophy merely to comfort the distraught Lampe <sup>21</sup> Or, Vaihinger's more serious contention that "For Kant no less than for Nietzsche the Idea of God was a mere heuristic fiction" <sup>22</sup>. Critics who are concerned to claim Kant's support for the theistic position divide sharply in their estimate of the importance of the Opus Postumum. Some, <sup>20</sup> ibid. 822, cited by Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, p. 197. <sup>21</sup> Werke, ed. Lachmann, iii 80r. <sup>22</sup> Quoted in England, Kant's Conception of God, p. 200.



impressed by its pantheistic and subjectivistic tendencies as well as by the evidently failing powers of the author, are inclined to dismiss it as the feeble meditations of a mind long past the height of its strength and no longer able to hold the several elements in its philosophy in consistent harmony. Others, noting the marked preoccupation of Kant's mind during this latter period with distinctively theistic questions and the stress upon the personal rather than the transcendental attributes of Deity, regard these fragments as of first importance, indicating the final culmination of a lifetime's thought. If we take the Opus Postumum at all seriously, the marked subjectivist coloring can hardly escape notice. We have already referred to a number of the passages in question; but the issue seems sufficiently vital to warrant assembling them together:--

"What is God? Is there a God? In the world considered as a totality of rational beings, there is also a totality of morally practical Reason, and consequently of an imperative Right and therewith also a God." 23.

"The thought of God is at the same time belief in him and in his Personality." 24.

"There is a God, for there is a Categorical Imperative." 25.

"God is not a Being outside of me, but merely a thought within me. God is the morally practical Reason giving laws to itself. One God, in me, and around me, and above me." 26.

"The proposition, There is a God, means no more than: There is in human reason, determining itself according to morality, a supreme Principle which perceives itself determined and necessitated to act without cessation in accordance with such a Principle.

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 23. Opus Postumum, p. 776.    24. Ibid.    25. p. 778.  
 26. p. 819.    27. Ibid.

"God must only be sought within us." 28.

"There is a God....without our having to suppose a substance which represents this Being to the senses." 29.

"In the idea of God as a moral Being, we live and move and have our being, impelled by the recognition of our duties as divine commands. The conception of God is the idea of a moral Being which, passing judgement in accordance with moral principles, exercises universal authority. This is not a hypothetical thing, but the pure practical Reason itself in its personality, and with executive powers in relation to the system of the world and its forces." 30.

"There is a Being in me, distinguished from myself as the cause of an effect wrought upon me, which freely--that is without being dependent on laws of nature in space and time--judges me within; justifying or condemning me; and I as man am myself this being, and it is no substance external to me, and--what is most surprising of all--its causality is no natural necessity but a determination ~~of~~ me to a free act." 31

"God is thus no substance discoverable outside of me but merely a moral relation within me." 32.

"God is a power commanding us through a Categorical Imperative without reference to our happiness; a real Person, but certainly not one perceptible as an object of the senses." 33.

From a careful study of these and others of the fragments, Professor Webb is led to a picture of Kant in his old age as "as little disposed as ever to a merely naturalistic immanentism, but less reluctant to express his profound reverence for the Moral Law in religious language, as reverence for the Presence of God therein immediately revealed; and, finally, attracted by the thought that, after all, in such a revelation God was more truly revealed as personal than when imaginatively represented as external to our own inner and essential life...Here is...a Presence

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28. Opus Postumum, p. 819. 29. p. 820. 30. p. 821.

31. p. 823. 32. p. 824. 33. p. 828.

All quotations from the Opus Postumum are from Professor Webb's translation in Kant's Philosophy of Religion.



'closer to us than breathing and nearer than hands and feet', one with our nature at its highest and at its best." Again he says, "The Opus Postumum then, if I am right, certainly does not suggest that Kant in his last days abandoned his faith in God as a real Being." <sup>34.</sup>

Doubtless Professor Webb is correct. Suffice it to say by word of comment that there is nothing in the quotations cited above which an ardent advocate of the subjectivist school (Professor Ames, for example, who has defined God as the personification of our highest moral ideals) would not find thoroughly acceptable and reconcilable with his fundamental position. If Kant did not himself give over belief in the objective reality of God, he opened wide the doors for the more sceptically minded who followed him.

We have dwelt at perhaps too great length on the contradictory strands in Kant's thought of God and the consequent difficulties for a clear impression of his convictions. At various periods of his thought there were three main arguments for God which gripped his reason. The first, which was his earliest favorite and which at one time he regarded as alone convincing, he gave over completely in the height of his preoccupation with criticism and apparently never returned to it. The second never ceased to haunt his imagination though he never advanced it as adequate ground for belief after the first Critique. The third won an increasing hold upon his conviction and loyalty, and it is probably quite proper that

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 34. Kant's Philosophy of Religion, pp. 199ff.



his constructive position should have become identified almost exclusively with this, the moral argument. We shall attempt a brief reference to the earlier proofs, then a somewhat fuller statement of the moral argument, and conclude with a brief critique of the whole impact of Kant's thought upon the development of theistic thought.

## IV.

The Argument

For a                      Until 1770 or a little later, Kant seems to have entertained no serious doubt of the mind's capacity to Necessary Being, prove the existence of God on purely speculative grounds. In all his earlier metaphysical writings, he advanced with confidence an argument from the dependence of the world upon a necessarily existing being. His contention has been variously described as his own particular form of the Ontological Argument (by Professor Webb<sup>35</sup>) and of the Cosmological Argument (by Professor Taylor<sup>36</sup>). As a matter of fact, as Dr. England clearly points out, in its fullest development it is a quite irreconcilable fusion of modified forms of each argument and was so defined by Kant himself<sup>37</sup>. It is precisely the argument which, in the First Critique, Kant vehemently sought to demolish in his exposure of the Cosmological Proof<sup>38</sup>. The first detailed exposition of Kant's convictions in the matter is to be found in the thesis for his degree, published in 1755<sup>39</sup>. There he was occupied by the problem of the relation between the prin-

35. Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, p.30.

36. A.E.Taylor, article "Theism", in H.E.R.E., Vol.12, p.275.

37. F.E.England, Kant's Conception of God, p.53.

38. Critique of Pure Reason, A 603-B 631 ff.

39. Principiorum primorum cognitionis metaphysicae Nova Dilucidatio.

ciple of sufficient reason and the principle of contradiction; and at the heart of the argument is his contention that "there is a being whose existence is prior to the possibility of itself and of all things; this being is therefore said to exist absolutely necessarily. He is<sup>40</sup> called God." More simply put, it is the argument from the possibility of anything to an antecedent ground of any and all possibilities. In Kant's own words, "nothing can be conceived as possible unless that which is real in every possible notion exists, and, indeed, exists with<sup>41</sup> absolute necessity." Otherwise nothing would be possible; everything would be impossible. God therefore is not merely the ground of everything which is possible; he is also the ground of everything which is real. Kant goes forward to show that such a being must be single, infinite, immutable,<sup>42</sup> eternal, perfect and finally spirit. Substantially the same argument is advanced in the essay published eight years later on The Only Possible Proof of the Being of God. But here Kant's version of the "ontological" argument is supplemented by a form of the "cosmological" proof--the argument from the existence of contingent things to the necessity of some non-contingent reality. But Kant is not fully convinced of the validity of this position for it is really an argument from the dependent character of the phenomenal world to an uncaused First Cause; and this reasoning hung on the principle of

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 40. Principiorum, Berlin edition I, 395 (England, p. 49).

41. Op.cit., 396.

42. Taylor, "Theism", p. 275.

sufficient reason which could not be employed because it would not receive general acceptance. The same general proof, again slightly modified, was contained in Kant's inaugural lecture in 1770, although here we note a restiveness and uncertainty which indicates that his mind is already moving toward the full critical position.

The core of the argument has been well summarized by Professor Taylor:-

"The argument on which he relies in all these essays is one and the same..and rests on the assumption that the world as given is an object for which we are bound by the principle of causality to seek an explanation.....The existence of an actual extra-mundane being once established as a pre-condition of the difference in intra-mundane things between what is possible and what is impossible, the internal unity, simplicity and perfection of the necessary being are then deduced as consequences of its necessary existence." 43.

Professor Taylor in this summary perhaps fails somewhat to distinguish with sufficient clarity the distinction between the two forms of the argument--the argument from causality and the argument from possibility. It was the latter to which Kant himself attached the greater significance. Indeed it was the confusion of these two points within a single argument which constituted the most serious logical weakness in Kant's early theism. For, as Dr. England well shows, they presuppose two quite different conceptions of the relation of God to the world. On the one hand, God is thought of as "the systematic unity of that reality which is the material of all possible, non-contradictory notions...the all-embracing essence, the -----  
43. Taylor, "Theism", p.276.



ultimate ground from which all consequents follow." On the other hand, God is conceived as creator, the Uncaused Cause.<sup>44</sup> Once this apparent contradiction has been resolved, however, the basic position can be restated with great if not compelling persuasiveness.<sup>45</sup> Its rejection by Kant himself in the first Critique was unnecessary and ill-advised; indeed his case against the position which had once been the very corner-stone of his system is less convincing than the original advocacy of the positive position itself. It is important to note that Kant's mind was greatly occupied with the significance of contingency even after he no longer believed it valid as a theistic proof. Indeed, it occupies his attention in a considerable part of the first Critique and his final judgment is that it, like all purely speculative arguments, may be accepted as a "regulative" concept but not as evidence of noumenal reality. In brief, it helps us to order our interpretation of the phenomenal world and is thus far forth useful; but we cannot accept it as ontological proof.<sup>46</sup> Kant's rejection of the ontological-cosmological argument was, of course, on grounds quite different from the queries raised by England; he regarded it as inevitably following from the whole critical position.<sup>47</sup>

### The Argument from Design.

Kant's mind was early gripped by the reasonableness of the argument from possibility and causality; but something in him far deeper than intelligence was laid

44. England, Kant's Conception of God, p. 56ff.

45. See, especially, Taylor, "Theism", p. 275-76.

46. See England, Kant's Conception of God, Chpt. VII.

47. Critique of Pure Reason, A 603-B 631.

hold of by the feature of Nature's orderliness and apparent design. When he summarily rejected the evidence from possibility and causality, he never returned to it with favorable attention; the evidence from Nature continued to haunt his imagination and stimulate speculation to the end. It is no chance that "the starry heavens" appear in his most famous saying linked with the moral imperative as the sources of awe and reverence. In the same year as the publication of his thesis for his degree, there appeared The General Natural History and Theory of the Heavens. His final attitude on the value of the indications of design in Nature is already foreshadowed--a pious recognition of a divine hand behind the harmony of the Universe, but the insistence that the actual arrangement of Nature might well be accounted for in terms of factors within the system and without recourse to the hypothesis of an external creator or designer.<sup>48</sup> In general, this was his estimate of the so-called teleological argument (in Kant's terminology, the Physico-Theological Proof) throughout his life. In the destruction of the traditional proofs in the first Critique, the teleological argument receives kindlier treatment than the other two. "This proof always deserves to be mentioned with respect. It is the oldest, the clearest, and the best suited to ordinary human reason." But "we still cannot approve the claims which this mode of argument would fain advance to apodeictic certainty."<sup>49</sup> For the evidence from design

48. See Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, pp. 26ff.

49. Critique of Pure Reason, A 624-B 652.

points at most to an architect, not to a creator; to a wise but not necessarily omniscient architect; and to one but not necessarily the only trans-mundane power behind Nature. Further, in Kant's view, the physico-theological proof, on careful scrutiny, is seen to be resolvable into the cosmological and that in turn into the ontological; with them therefore it must be rejected.<sup>50</sup>

It is a matter of interesting speculation whether, as Adickes holds, in his later life Kant tended to regard the natural world as originating in a non-moral or even immoral intelligence. There is certainly evidence in this direction among the writings of the Opus Postumum.<sup>51</sup> Such a dualism between the world of Nature and the moral life is not denied by any of the later sayings which I have seen. In that case, Kant's pessimism about the evidence for God in Nature would be the negative counterpart of his increasing stress upon the immanence of God within the moral consciousness.<sup>52</sup> We have already suggested that the central philosophical problem of the century which followed him was precisely at this point--the apparent dualism between the realm of Nature and the realm of values.<sup>53</sup> A little later we shall try to show that that unhappy problem was the direct, indeed the inevitable, fruit of Kant's fundamental teaching.<sup>54</sup> If Adickes is right, the problem did not emerge from the Kantian philosophy contrary to the founder's thought; it was explicit not merely implicit

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50. Critique of Pure Reason, A 635-B 656ff.  
 51. Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, pp. 186ff.  
 52. See, above, p. 35. 53. See, above, p. 33. 54. See, below, p. 66.



in his own final meditations on the matter. But whether Adickes has read the mind of the aged Kant correctly on this point is a question which would carry us beyond the scope of this paper.

## V.

The Moral  
Argument.

Kant was not the first to approach the idea of God through the facts of the moral life. Almost the central metaphysical conviction of the Platonic philosophy sought to identify the perfectly good with the ultimately real. Indeed in Plato's most mature thought we find the argument from values to God suggested in far sounder and more persuasive form than the mind of Kant ever envisaged; and Plato's discussion has the added merit of linking the argument from value and the argument from design harmoniously. The self-moving mover of the heavenly spheres, the "mind which is the ground of the whole",<sup>55</sup> is also "the best soul",<sup>56</sup> the ground of the Good.<sup>57</sup> Had the thought of the Nineteenth Century found its inspiration in Greece rather than in Konigsberg, what happy consequences for the intellectual struggles of the period might have followed! For there is probably no more promising starting-point for the solution of the troublesome relationship of Nature and values than the later Platonic dialogues. Plato supplies most of the

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55. Philebus, 30d. Cp. Phaedo 97c.

56. Laws 963e ff. Cp. also Laws 896e ff.

57. See, especially, the exceedingly fresh and convincing development of Plato's theism in an article by Professor Robert L. Calhoun, "Plato as Religious Realist", in Religious Realism, ed. by D.C. Macintosh, espec. pp. 239ff.

needed corrective for Kant's onesidedness and limitations. But he had become known in the history of thought as the author of the argument from design. Nor is Aristotle wholly to blame for this partial appreciation of his greater teacher. For, although the conviction that the author of Nature is also the ground of the Good seems to have strongly impregnated Plato's mind, he nowhere attempts an adequate development of an argument from value. And, in his final systematic work, the Laws, it is an elaborate rendering of the teleological argument which furnishes the cap-stone of his philosophy. Aristotle lifted this section of the tenth book of the Laws, made its thesis his own, presented it in even more arid and strictly speculative form, and thereby determined that the theistic discussion of the succeeding centuries should be, for the most part, abstract and lifeless in character. Professor Baillie is probably justified in his contention that "much of the deeper meaning (or the Platonic view) became lost to the later philosophical tradition.....To us it now reappears as a characteristically modern insight and as finding its first fully argued expression in the Critical Philosophy of Kant."

Kant approached the moral argument over the ruins of the so-called speculative arguments. The suggestion that his positive proof represented an afterthought, advanced to safeguard the interests of morality or to vindicate his personal piety or to save the tottering

58. But Professor Calhoun has shown that the self-moving mover of Laws X is a living spirit. Op.cit, p.242 n.134.  
 59. John Baillie, The Interpretation of Religion, p.259f.



faith of poor Lampe or for any other secondary motive, and that the negative conclusions of the critique of the traditional arguments represent Kant's real convictions --<sup>60</sup> this suggestion may be dismissed as groundless. There are hints of Kant's attraction to a theistic argument grounded in morality in the pre-critical writings. The intent of the first Critique--to clear the ground of false estimates of the value of scientific speculation in order that the way may be clear for a sounder approach to ultimate questions--and the character of that sounder approach, i.e. through a logic of morality, are clearly indicated in the preface to the second edition of the Critique of Pure Reason.<sup>61</sup> The destruction of the traditional proofs in the body of the Critique is immediately followed by an anticipation in brief of the fuller development of the moral argument which is to occupy the second Critique.<sup>62</sup>

60. See, espec., Heine, Werke, ed. Lachmann, iii 80f., and the more serious charge of Vaihinger quoted above, p. 37. Also Bosanquet's famous charge that Kant's theism is an "unessential survival" of superstition, in Essays and Addresses, p. 129.

61. Critique of Pure Reason, B xxv ff.

62. In the "Critique of all Theology", espec. A 633-B 661ff., from which these passages are selected:-

"Now since there are practical laws which are absolutely necessary, that is, the moral laws, it must follow that if these necessarily presuppose the existence of any being as the condition of the possibility of their obligatory power, this existence must be postulated; and this for the sufficient reason that the conditioned from which the inference is drawn to this determinate condition, is itself known a priori to be absolutely necessary. At some future time we shall show that the moral laws do not merely presuppose the existence of a supreme being, but also, as themselves in a different connection absolutely necessary, justify us in postulating it, though, indeed, only from a practical point of view. For the present, however, we are leaving this mode of argument aside." (A634-B 662)



Toward the close of the first Critique he returns to an even more satisfactory anticipation of the later constructive argument<sup>63</sup>. The Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals, midway between the first and second Critiques, develops the essential ethical doctrine of the Critique of Practical Reason though not its full metaphysical position. From the outset, it was clear that Kant intended the first Critique as merely the first term of a series which finally developed as a trilogy and, therefore, as primarily occupied with prolegomena. To the end of his life, the facts of moral experience seemed to him indissolubly linked with the idea of God; indeed, toward the close, their mutual interdependence appealed to him as more rather than less intimate.<sup>64</sup> From the confluence of these many evidences, we may take it as finally established that, from the first Critique onward, Kant regarded the moral argument as the alone convincing theistic proof. We may accept at its face reading the familiar saying in the preface to the second edition that "I have therefore found it necessary to deny knowledge (of God, freedom and immortality) in order to make room<sup>65</sup> for faith (or belief)."

63. Critique of Pure Reason, A 808-B 833 ff.

"It was the moral ideas that gave rise to that concept of the Divine Being which we now hold to be correct--and we so regard it not because speculative reason convinces us of its correctness, but because it completely harmonizes with the moral principles of reason." A 818-B 846.

64. Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, pp 190 ff. and quotations given above, p. 38.

65. Critique of Pure Reason, B xxx.

But the time has come to confront the moral argument itself. It may be briefly summarized as follows:-

One of the indisputable facts of human experience is the presence of the sense of moral obligation within my consciousness, the claim of the moral law (the categorical imperative) upon my will. It directs that I shall always do the right irrespective of the outcome of my fidelity--either the success of my good efforts or the happiness which may or may not accrue to me. This moral imperative is a "given" fact of life; it is not deducible from any other fact nor from reason. It is a unique datum of experience.

But upon more careful examination, the moral law, like sense-experience, discloses certain inherent conditions or principles ("a systematic unity of pre-<sup>66</sup>supposed conditions"). These must hold, i.e. must possess noumenal reality, if the moral law is to be vindicated as reasonable, i.e. if the moral law is to be regarded as what it has already shown itself to be--a noumenal fact. In the first place, the claims of the moral law are not only absolute, they are universal; the realization that I should always do the right gives place to the more precise and inclusive maxim that I should always "so act that my action might become a universal principle of action." Further, if the claims of morality upon my allegiance are to be reasonable and not a dastardly deception, I must be genuinely free to accept or reject those claims; the moral law requires

66. Kemp Smith, Commentary, p. 571.



the postulate of freedom. But, further and more important, if the moral law is to be reasonable, then clearly those human wills which respond to it and are completely devoted to its commands should achieve their goals; the purposes which the law directs them to serve should actually be realized. Otherwise, from this angle as well, the claims of morality would be a dastardly deception; I could never respect a rule which ordered me to a certain action and then did not support its order by assuring the success of the effort. Moreover, in a thoroughly rational world, the actual realization of the ends of morality should be precisely in ratio to the extent of devotion to those ends. Clearly no such exact reward of good effort by successful achievement occurs in this life; therefore the moral law must postulate immortality. Finally, it would not be satisfactory (even if it were possible) if this precise award of achievement in proportion to virtue occurred through some kind of "natural tendency" in things. It must be the gift of an intelligent and absolutely righteous will; therefore the moral law requires the postulate of God.

We have taken the liberty of making a rather free rendering of Kant's thought. Let us now hear the same argument in his own words:--

"Only a rational being has the faculty of acting in conformity with the idea of law, or from principles; only a rational being, in other words, has a will. The



determination of such a will according to objective laws is therefore called obligation....The idea that a certain principle is objective, and binding upon the will, is a command of reason, and the statement of the command in a formula is an imperative....Now all imperatives command either hypothetically or categorically...The categorical imperative declares that an act is in itself or objectively necessary, without any reference to another end....It has to do, not with the matter of an action and the result expected to follow from it, but simply with the form and principle from which the action itself proceeds. The action is essentially good if the motive of the agent is good, let the consequences be what they may. This imperative may be called the imperative of morality.<sup>67</sup> "The moral law is given as a fact of pure reason of which we are a priori conscious, and which is apodictically certain, though it be granted that in experience no example of its exact fulfilment can be found. Hence the objective reality of the moral law cannot be proved by any deduction by any efforts of the theoretical reason, whether speculatively or empirically supported...and yet it is firmly established of itself."<sup>68</sup>

"There is therefore but one categorical imperative, which may be stated thus: -Act in conformity with that maxim, and that maxim only, which you can at the same time will to be a universal law."<sup>69</sup>

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67. The Metaphysic of Morality, p260--264.

68. Critique of Practical Reason, Rosenkranz, VIII. pp.163 f.

69. The Metaphysic of Morality, p.269.

"Will is conceived of as a faculty of determining itself in action in accordance with the idea of certain laws.....The will is the causality of living beings in so far as they are rational. Freedom is that causality in so far as it can be regarded as efficient without being determined to activity by any other cause than itself.....A free will is the same thing as a will that conforms to moral laws....The will of a rational being, in other words, can be his own will only if he acts under the idea of freedom, and therefore this idea must in the practical sphere be ascribed to all rational beings....This, however does not prove that man is actually free, but only that, without presupposing freedom, we cannot conceive of ourselves as rational beings, who are conscious of causality with respect to our actions, that is, as endowed with will.....The explanation of the possibility of categorical imperatives, then, is, that the idea of freedom makes me a member of the intelligible world."<sup>70</sup> "Independence of natural law is freedom, in the strictest or transcendental sense of the word. Therefore a will for which only the mere form of universal law can serve as the form of its maxim, must be a free will.....The consciousness of the moral law, therefore, leads inevitably to the conception of freedom."<sup>71</sup>

"The conception highest contains two distinct

70. The Metaphysic of Morality, pp. 275; 294-302.

71. Critique of Practical Reason, pp. 30ff.

ideas, which must be carefully distinguished, if we are to avoid needless perplexities. The highest may mean either the supreme (supremum) or the complete (consummatum). The supreme is a condition which is itself unconditioned and is not subordinate to anything else (originarium). The complete, again, is a whole which is not part of a larger whole of the same kind (perfectissimum). Now virtue, or the worthiness to be happy,.... is therefore the supreme good. But it is not the whole or complete good which finite rational beings desire to obtain. The complete good includes happiness... The highest good of a possible world must therefore consist in the union of virtue and happiness in the same person, that is, in happiness exactly proportioned to morality. ... Perfect harmony of the will with the moral law is holiness, a perfection of which no rational being existing in the world of sense is capable at any moment of his life. Yet holiness is demanded as practically necessary, and it can be found only in an infinite progress towards perfect harmony with the moral law.... Now this infinite progress is possible only if we presuppose that the existence of a rational being is prolonged to infinity, and that he retains his personality for all time. This is what we mean by the immortality of the soul. This immortality is inseparably bound up with the moral law. It is a postulate of pure practical reason, that is a proposition that cannot be proved theoretically, but depends upon an a priori



practical law of unconditioned necessity."

"The moral law leads us to postulate not only the immortality of the soul but the existence of God....This second postulate of the existence of God rests upon the necessity of presupposing the existence of a cause adequate to the effect which has to be explained..... A rational being existing in the world...ought to seek to promote the highest good, and therefore the highest good must be possible. He must therefore postulate the existence of a cause of nature as a whole, which is distinct from nature, and which is able to connect happiness and morality in exact harmony with each other..... The highest good is thus capable of being realized in the world, only if there exists a supreme cause of nature whose causality is in harmony with the moral character of the agent. Now, a being that is capable of acting from the consciousness of law is a rational being, an intelligence, and the causality of that being, proceeding as it does from the consciousness of law, is a will..If therefore we are entitled to postulate the highest derivative good, or the best world, we must also postulate the actual existence of the highest original good, that is, the existence of God. Now it is our duty to promote the highest good, and hence it is not only allowable, but it is necessarily bound up with the very idea of duty, that we should presuppose the possibility of that highest good. And as this possibility can be established

only under condition that God exists, the presupposition of the highest good is inseparably connected with duty or, in other words, it is morally necessary to hold the existence of God." 73.

## VI.

The Moral Argument  
Examined.

One or two comments will serve both to clarify somewhat Kant's thought and to reveal some of its more serious inadequacies.

a. It is absolutely fundamental to his ethics that the obligation to right action, the claims of duty, do not depend upon the rationality of the world, the existence of God, the hope of immortality, or any other metaphysical assumption. They are regnant and absolute in their own right. "Right is right and duty duty though the heavens fall." Kant himself could not be too emphatic on this point.

"It seems more in accordance with human nature and with the purity of morals to base the expectation of a future world on the sentiments of a well-behaved soul than contrariwise to base its good behavior on the hope of another world." 74

And, again:--

"So far, then, as practical reason has the right to serve as our guide, we shall not look upon actions as obligatory because they are the commands of God, but shall regard them as divine commands because we have an inward obligation to them." 75

And, once more:

"A good will is good not because of what it performs or accomplishes, not by its aptness for the attainment of some proposed end, but simply by virtue of its volition, that is, it is good in itself. Even if it should happen that owing to special disfavour of fortune or the niggardly provision of

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73. Critique of Practical Reason, pp 130-131.

74. Traume eines Geistersehers, quoted in Baillie, op.cit. 263.

75. Critique of Pure Reason, A 819-20 447.



a step-motherly nature, this will should wholly lack power to accomplish its purpose,....it would still shine like a jewel by its own light, as something which has its whole value in itself." 76

The same insistence characterizes the Metaphysic of Morals throughout and frequent passages in the second Critique,<sup>77</sup> some of which we have quoted above.

As a matter of fact Kant himself was not completely successful in maintaining his certainty that duty could be devotedly served irrespective of duty's outcome and its metaphysical sanctions. As Professor Pringle-Pattison has so clearly shown in his admirable discussion of this very point, Kant does not really believe that the rational man will continue absolutely faithful in his loyalty to the moral law unless he is assured of his vindication in a future life and the vindication of his principles by a divine Being.<sup>78</sup> For example, what are we to make of the contrast between the passage just quoted from the Metaphysic of Morals and the following selection from the Critique of Judgment published five years later? He is discussing the predicament of a "well-disposed man such as Spinoza" who holds firmly to the commands of duty even though he is convinced that there is no God and no future life--a man who would seem in admirable degree to meet Kant's own standard of the thoroughly virtuous man as far as ethical attitudes are concerned. (The writing is intricate, but the meaning is clear!--

"Thus the end which this well-disposed man had, and was bound to have, before his eyes in following

76. Metaphysic of Morals 'Abbott's trans., pp. 9-10) quoted by Pringle-Pattison, Idea of God in Recent Philosophy, p. 2

77. See, above, p. 53.

78. Op. cit., Cht. 2.



the laws of morality, he must assuredly give up as impossible of attainment; or else, if we wish to remain still faithful to the moral vocation whereof he is inwardly conscious, and not to suffer the feeling of reverence, inspired in him directly by the Moral Law and urging him to obey it, to be weakened by disbelief in the reality of the only ideal end adequate to its sublime demands--a weakening which cannot but involve damage to the moral sentiment--he must, as he quite well can, since there is nothing essentially contradictory in the assumption, assume, from a practical point of view, that is to say, in order to form for himself at least a conception of the end presented to him as a moral duty, the existence of a Moral Author of the world, that is, of God."79

Further, the requirement that happiness (even in the very high meaning which is always Kant's usage) shall be invariably linked with virtue and in exact ratio inevitably introduces a hedonistic tinge into his ethics and a utilitarian strain into his theology. God is presented in an instrumental light--to effect the equation between virtue and happiness.<sup>80</sup> And no really good man wishes meticulous rewards for performance of duty as Kant proposes. The history of heroism stamps his suggestion as cheap and untrue to man's capacity for truly disinterested devotion. No one reading Professor Pringle Pattison's own moving delineation of the attitude of the truly virtuous man and the instances he adduces will longer question the distinctly inferior merit both of Kant's reasoning at this point and of his underlying position.

The truth is that a clear choice must be made of one of two alternatives; Kant, in the old phrase, seeks to eat his cake and have it too. Either duty is, as he claims absolute in its grip upon the virtuous man and he desires

79. Critique of Judgment, p. 456, quoted by Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 8.  
80. Pringle Pattison, *op. cit.*, p. 34; and Baillie, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

no metaphysical assurances in support of it; in which case, the whole problem of God becomes (in the Kantian philosophy) a purely theoretical and speculative interest with no vital bearing upon practical life. Or, the metaphysical issues are vital to the virtuous man in his practical life; in which case, the moral will is not as completely disinterested as Kant maintained. Professor Taylor has made a valiant attempt to save the strength of Kant's position; but, as I think, with only partial success. Indeed his own putting of the matter will reveal the inherent weakness of Kant's contention:--

"One and the same conviction of the absolute-ness of moral values...compels us to pronounce the world evil and our own moral striving a vain show if the highest good is not realized or realizable. ....We are confronted by a dilemma: either the order of things rightly understood...is a moral order and realizes the highest good or the highest good is not realized and all moral effort is senseless and foredoomed to failure, in which case the conviction of the absolute value of the good, on which morality is based, is a mere illusion." 81

If Professor Taylor has stated the issue as well as is possible (as I think he has), then we seem to be driven to the second of the alternatives suggested above--i.e., that the good man's judgment about ultimate matters is a vital factor in the quality of his ethical devotion. On either reading of the matter, Professor Pringle-Pattison's rather severe stricture seems hardly exaggerated:- "Owing to the extraordinary hold which the individualism and external deism of his century had over him, God seems to be introduced in Kant's moral theory as an afterthought, and He is -----  
81. Taylor, "Theism", in H.E.R.E., Vol. 12, p. 281.



connected with the law not as its inspirer or author,  
but in the merely administrative capacity of Paymaster." <sup>82</sup>

b. A second comment follows from the preceding consideration. On the alternative and stricter reading of Kant's deeper conviction--i.e., that the moral law claims adherence without metaphysical sanctions--the whole theistic inquiry becomes academic, of theoretical interest only. If we accept Kant's moralistic criterion of the good man as one whose will is fully dedicated to moral ends and if morality is completely autonomous, then the discovery of God and the assurance of immortality will not strengthen by one iota the will to goodness within him. As good man, he will be indifferent to the outcome of metaphysical speculation. Will he, then, have any interest whatever in these questions? Possibly, but not as good man; rather as thinker. It will be not his moral will but his reason which will raise the queries and urge him on to their solution. In this perspective, the "moral argument" is not at all an argument in support of morality, it is an argument in satisfaction of reason. Its aim is the vindication not of the moral law but of the rationality of the Universe. And that is, I think, precisely the valid employment of the Kantian proof. That that is the more correct interpretation of Kant's position is clear from a number of his own statements:-

"Though morality can subsist without theology as regards its rule, it cannot do so as regards the final purpose which this same rule imposes upon it, unless reason is to be deprived of what is necessary to it." <sup>83</sup>

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82. Pringle Pattison, op.cit., p.35.

83. Critique of Judgement, quoted by Baillie, op.cit., p.263.



The same conclusion is inevitable from the interpretations of some of Kant's soundest commentators. For example, Professor Taylor's words are almost an echo of Kant's own statement:-

"....unless there is to be a hopeless conflict between our conception of the highest good and the first principle of duty, such a Supreme Being must really exist and, what is more, must be spiritual." 82

In other words, unless the Universe is to be regarded as fundamentally irrational, we must posit God. In similar vein is Professor Webb's defense of the argument:-

"I do not think that there can be denied to be a demand made, as it were, by the moral consciousness upon the world, which is quite distinct from a desire for personal happiness, apart from the hope of attaining which one would not count it worth while to be good." 83

That is, unless the Universe is irrational, it must support the devotion of the moral will. It is this feature of the moral argument which, in spite of Kant's professed abhorance of sterile rationalism and his loyalty to the practical interests of morality, makes his argument hopelessly rationalistic, intellectualistic, irrelevant to living issues, and consequently unimpressive. It has a more serious consequence which we must now note. 7

c. There is a third weakness in Kant's formulation of the approach to God; it is the most serious, because it involves its logical validity.

It will be recalled that in our own free paraphrase of the moral argument <sup>84</sup>, there occurred such phrases as:

"if the claims of morality are reasonable..I must be free"

82. Taylor, "Theism", in H.E.R.E., Vol. 12, p. 280. (Italics mine)

83. Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, p. 65.

84. Above, p. 51.

"if the moral law is reasonable...human wills devoted to it should achieve their goals"; "in a thoroughly rational world,...happiness should be in exact ratio to virtue." These are, I think, not unfair renderings of the logic of the argument. A moment's reflection upon them will reveal that Kant has read into his premiss precisely the conclusion he is concerned to establish. Let us state the point afresh:-

The purpose of the moral argument is to vindicate the reasonableness of belief in God. Belief in God would be reasonable if the world is essentially rational. But the moral will requires that the world should be rational. Therefore, it must be rational and there must be a God.

Or, to put the matter in slightly different form:--

If the moral law is reasonable there must be a God. If there is a God the moral law must be reasonable.

It is clear that at no point has Kant shown evidence either for the rationality of the moral law (in this metaphysical sense) or for the rationality of the world. He has failed completely at just the point where the modern mind is satisfied with greatest difficulty--the harmony between man's moral consciousness and the ultimate reality behind Nature.

That this weakness is inherent in the whole position is made doubly clear by reference to the two statements of Kant's interpreters quoted on the preceding page. "Unless

there is to be a hopeless conflict, etc....", says Professor Taylor. But that is just the point. What assurance have we from Kant that there is not a hopeless conflict between the first principle of duty and the ultimate nature of the world? "There is a demand made by the moral consciousness upon the world...." argues Professor Webb. But what right has the moral consciousness to make demands upon the reality of which it itself is only one aspect? This is, of course, the main burden of Professor Caird's<sup>85</sup> exhaustive critique of the whole critical philosophy. I am interested to discover Professor Baillie coming to the recognition of the same Achilles' heel of Kant's argument:-

"Has Kant ever really offered any demonstration that our recognition of duty's claim upon us carries with it the belief that the universe, as moral environment, must be no less ethically constituted than ourselves, as moral agents?" 36

Kant's failure at this point is crucial because it occurs at the turning-point of the argument. It is all the more unhappy because a slight modification would have given him a sound and persuasive development of the argument from the facts of the moral life. He was estopped from its use by his prejudice against any appeal to the principle of causality. Such a statement of the argument would make its progress not from what should be to what is; but from what is to what, in consequence, must be. Its proposal would be not "if the moral consciousness is to be valid, there should be a God"; but "because the moral consciousness is, and is what it is, there must be a God."

<sup>85</sup>. Caird, The Critical Philosophy of Kant, Bk. I, Cht. 14; Bk. II, Cht. V.  
<sup>86</sup>. Baillie, The Interpretation of Religion, p. 275. Cht. V.



## VII.

An Estimate  
of Kant's  
Influence.

It remains to add certain more general impressions of Kant's influence upon the progress of theological thought in the century and a quarter since his death. If space permitted we would need to trace the development of conviction on the two positions which we have selected for special mention--the dichotomy of appearance and reality and the moral argument for God--during that period. It is hardly an overstatement that the speculation of the Nineteenth and first quarter of the Twentieth Centuries is a commentary on the problems as he formulated them. The distinction between phenomenal and noumenal is the single focal center with reference to which philosophy since may be oriented; modern thought's great query has been--what is the relation of the world as we know it to the world of ultimate reality?--and it is inescapably with us still. And many of the strongest theological minds have been pre-occupied with the attempt to build a proof for God on the evidence from man's moral experience.

Our indebtedness to the great little thinker of Konigsberg and to the influences which have sprung from him can hardly be exaggerated. But our major concern is with the difficulties which philosophical and theological developments in the modern period have created for the faith of the plain man of today. From that perspective it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the Kantian influence has strangled and cursed the religious thought of our

87. Cp. Pringle Pattison, Idea of God, Chh. 3ff. Also W.M. Horton, Theism and the Modern Mood, p. 54ff.

times. And at least three points:-

Appearance  
and Reality.

- 1. The basic dichotomy of appearance and reality.

We have already suggested that this problem has suffered serious reformulation since Kant, and that it has traced a development which he little anticipated and, quite probably, would have deplored. Increasingly the distinction has been defined no longer as that of appearance and reality, but of facts and values. The realm of facts, we have been told, is the exclusive domain of science; philosophy and religion are concerned with values. But the modification in Kant's treatment of the dichotomy has been more far-reaching by far. To Kant it was the distinction between the world of phenomenal appearances of which we may have "scientific knowledge" but no ultimate or final certainty, and the world of ultimate reality of which we may have no scientific knowledge but such practical certainty as men may live by. Under the alchemy of modern thought, we now face the contrast between the world of facts of which science gives us the only certain knowledge we have, and the realm of values which possesses no validity beyond our own appreciations and feelings. What was to Kant only appearance and therefore of negligible metaphysical importance has become for us the only reality and the source of the only certainty we possess; what was for Kant the true and supremely important key to reality--the insights achieved through moral experience--has become for us the insecure realm of subjective valuations. The roles are reversed. Science, formerly merely the useful

interpreter of phenomenal appearances, is now hailed as our sole guide to truth; while the moral consciousness, to Kant our one safe pathfinder to God, now struggles to establish its right even to tell us what we ought and  
 88  
 ought not to do.

But the dichotomy stands condemned not only because of its consequences. At its face value it is fundamentally unsound. Human experience knows nothing of facts divorced from values or values unrelated to facts; nor of mere appearances or mere reality. When we view a sunset we do not see wave-lengths or beauty; we see a beautiful sunset. When we meet great men our acquaintance is not with gland enzymes or courage; but with courageous people. The only facts we ever know in the great rich deep web of human experience are pregnant with meaning. And we never confront values--of truth or beauty or character or love or whatever--save as they come to us imbedded in concrete facts and mediated to us through the world of facts. By the same token if, as Kant held, we never succeed in pressing behind appearances to pure reality, they are always appearances of something real. And what reality would we wish to contact with unless it came to us in the only medium through which we could recognize it, the stuff of our phenomenal experiences? Facts divorced from values are abstractions from the richness of actual experience, useful for scientific purposes only. Values divorced from facts are abstractions from the concreteness of actual  
 experience, attractive to the imagination only. So sympath-  
 88. On the justification for this in Kant's later thought,  
 see above. p. 37f. Cp. Pringle-Pattison, op.cit., pp. 47ff.



tic an interpreter of Kant as Professor Kemp Smith has put it thus:-

"Existences and values do not constitute independent orders. They interpenetrate and neither can be adequately dealt with apart from considerations appropriate to the other." 89

Moral Values  
and the Realm  
of Nature.

2. The second disservice of the Kantian tradition was implicit in the first. It is the insistence upon building the argument for God on the basis of moral experience alone, and without reference pro or con to evidence from the external world of Nature.

Here the major blame must fall upon the theologians, notably Ritschl and his school, who pressed this feature of Kant's thought to its ultimate. Moral experience became religious experience. And all too often religious experience became the uncriticized and unverifiable emotional intuitions of the individual worshipper. "What does it matter what science may tell us about the world of Nature; do we not meet God in our own hearts, and is that not quite enough?" Here is one of the most fecund sources of the Nineteenth Century's enmity of science and religion, and of the discredit of the religious position in the thought of intelligent men and women.

Kant himself was too wise to completely embrace such an antithesis. His own deeper insight is revealed in the most famous of his dicta:—"Two things induce the soul to reverence--the starry heavens above AND the moral law within." His sense for the realities of experience

89. Kemp Smith, Commentary, lxi. Cp. Taylor, Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, pp. 55; 61.

90. Cp. Ritschl's statement to a student, quoted in Horton, Theism and the Modern Mood, p. 96:—"Natural Theology! There's no such thing!"

91 Critique of Practical Reason, Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII, p. 322.

overmastered his narrow logic. Man is and will always be led to belief in God not merely as a necessity of the moral consciousness or an inference from inner experience, but by contemplation of the world of Nature,<sup>92</sup> the province of scientific inquiry. Furthermore the starry heavens and the moral law are aspects of a single ultimate reality. The conclusions they suggest are not exactly alike but they are not unrelated. The two aspects of our experience of reality are intimately interrelated and interdependent. Any adequate idea of God must satisfy our best interpretation of both realms of experience; it must include and harmonize them. Neither man's mind nor his soul can rest satisfied until the former discovers that both Nature and values point him to God; and the latter finds through Nature as well as through values a living experience of God. Our study of the findings of science and our interpretation of the experiences of values should both unmistakeably point us to God. And in general they should speak of the same kind of God. For all we wish to know about him we shall need every ray of light each study can offer.

Moral and  
Other Values.

3. There is a third weakness in the Kantian heritage which in its ultimate consequences may possibly be more far-reaching for ill. Even if it be conceded that the experience of values if not the only pathway to God is still the principal pathway, Kant was mistaken in interpreting values wholly in terms of morality.

92. The latest supporter of the Humeian-Kantian attack upon the value of the cosmological and teleological arguments is Professor Kemp Smith in his interesting lecture "Is Divine Existence Credible?" I cannot agree with him.

Surely we do not need to return to Plato for the reminder that there are at least three great types of ultimate value and that no final priority can be assigned to any one of them. The deliveries of the moral consciousness are not our exclusive guide to reality; we require the complete experience of all that is lovely as well as all that is good. And it is manifest that, through the response of the human spirit to beauty, the divine spirit may speak to man in a way utterly different from the voice of conscience. And the insights into the nature and purpose and ways of the divine commerce with man which are so gained are utterly different insights from those given through the deliveries of conscience.<sup>93</sup>

The indictment to be drawn against the narrowly moralistic approach of the great Protestant Puritan tradition which has followed from Kant and Fichtel is more compelling still. It fails not merely<sup>in</sup> that it is incomplete, but<sup>in</sup> that it almost never leads through to its goal (as, indeed, it never did with Kant himself)--to a living experience of a living God, the God of religion. It pictures man reaching up through ethical striving toward God. But living religion always pictures God vitally active in reaching out toward man. The certainty of God is not a deduction from one's own moral effort; it is a response to a persuasive, impelling Presence beyond. This, together with the predominance of impersonal scientific categories and the reliance upon a purely inductive,

93. Cp. the admirable development of this weakness in Kant's thought in Barbour, The Ethical Approach to Theism, p. 31ff. Also Pringle-Pattison, op. cit., p. 31.



"scientific" apologetic<sup>94</sup>, is, I believe, largely responsible for the sterility of the contemporary layman's religious experience, his loss of the vital sense of the presence of God. He is not certain of a living God because he has been misled as to where and how he should expect to become aware of God. This is not the complete answer to our central problem, but it is no small part of it.

A closer attention to the rise of religion in primitive life might have saved us from this fallacy. Apparently religion begins in the history of the race rather as an experience of the Numinous, the Wholly Other,<sup>95</sup> than as the recognition of Conscience, the Wholly Within. But we need not instance primitive religion. We need only recall from our own experience the birth of religion in the soul of a child. Am I not right (and this is of incalculable importance to us)--the religion of childhood does not begin in consciousness of duty; it is brought to birth by the gift of love, devotion, sympathy, sacrifice, faith from another, from parent, nurse, friend? The God whom children know does not speak through a voice within, but through a person without. And the child's sense of duty, if it is more than reluctant acquiescence in an external rule, is the glad return of the child's soul to the trust, the love, the high expectation of another. Religion begins then not in the awakening to something within myself, but in the spontaneous response to someone outside myself.

94. See above, p. 4, 7; 15ff.

95. Cp. Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy.

Also Kemp Smith, Is Divine Existence Credible?, p. 6, 26f.  
Also the writings of the late Baron Von Hügel.

I submit that what religion is at its first birth in the soul of the child, it continues to be in its final maturity. Always its focal reference is definitely beyond me. In terms of its impact upon me, it speaks not through the compulsion of obligation but through the persuasion of love, yes love even to sacrifice. And in terms of my response, religion is not the doing of something because I ought but the gift of self because I must.

### VIII.

#### Transition.

Our study of Kant has revealed certain basic issues which he bequeathed to his successors. They will be found to reappear or to be implicit in each of the long series of reformulations of his position which the Nineteenth Century produced, and again in contemporary restatements of the moral argument. For this reason they may be borne in mind as we examine the theistic positions of four British thinkers of our own day; and they may well furnish convenient connecting-threads for the critical discussion. They are:-

1. The Objectivity of Moral Values.
2. The Relation of the "Realm of Values" to the "Realm of Nature".
3. The Relations of Moral Values and Other Values; and Their Relative Bearing upon the Idea of God.
4. The Problem of Evil.

The major interest of this paper is confined to contemporary British thought; and considerations of space forbid the tracing of the progress of the moral argument in the century and a quarter between the death of Kant and

the opening of our main enquiry. The names which would supply milestones for such an historical journey would be, in succession, Fichte, Lotze, Ritschl, Herrmann, Martineau, and possibly James Ward. In Fichte, the subjectivist tendencies of the failing Kant appear in their logical outcome; God is the impersonal moral order and nothing more.

"It is not at all doubtful, but rather the most certain of all things, and indeed the ground of all other certainty, and the only absolute objective truth, that there is a moral world-order.... This living and active moral order is itself God. We need no other God, and we can comprehend no other.... The conception of God as a separate substance is impossible and contradictory." 96

In Lotze, on the other hand, the more serious weaknesses of Kant's thought are largely made good. A "complete respect for the physical sciences, for their developed method and their intellectual force"<sup>97</sup> holds him true to his high determination to build his metaphysic upon all the data available to us, not merely that of moral experience. The outcome is a lofty theism, presenting us with the conception of an all-wise, almighty and all-good personal spiritual Being (represented by Lotze's symbol "M"), the creating and sustaining ground of all that is, to be thought of as akin to our human souls but without their imperfections and limitations.<sup>98</sup> It is matter of regret that it was not the richer and more daring conception of Lotze rather than Kant's sterile theism which fructified subsequent reflection. With Ritschl and his disciple Herrmann, the Kantian dichotomy of -----

96. Gesammelte Werke, V. pp. 177-189, quoted in Baillie, The Interpretation of Religion, p. 278, q.v.

97. Quoted in Baillie, The Interpretation of Religion, p. 280.

98. For an admirable very brief statement of Lotze's position, see Taylor, "Theism", p. 281f. Cp. Baillie, op.cit., pp. 279ff.



Nature and values, science and religion, is heightened with that haughty disdain for 'natural theology' which we have noted earlier<sup>99</sup>; theology is bidden to seek God solely in the realm of 'value-judgments', and there was discharged into theological circles a train of tragic consequences which a half century of intelligent reconstruction<sup>100</sup> will hardly overtake. Martineau brought the contribution of a rich theism rooted in independent sources and developed along independent lines; it was fundamentally Kantian in placing the central emphasis upon the ethical life, but enriched and ennobled by an understanding of the deeper meaning of religion which forever escaped Kant's<sup>101</sup> comprehension. We shall meet not a few reflections of James Ward's mind in the theism of Professor Sorley--the fruit of many years of intimate intellectual and spiritual comradeship.

But Professor Taylor rightly holds that, with the single exception of Lotze, Kant's immediate successors<sup>102</sup> gave no fundamentally new turn to the theistic problem. The advance of the following century may be less helpfully gathered from a historical survey than from a study of the variant forms which, in the passage of the years, the moral argument came to assume. With such a comparative analysis we may make our transition to the body of this paper.

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99. See above, p. 68.

100. For an exactly opposite judgment, see Baillie, The Interpretation of Religion, pp. 282ff.

101. See, especially, Pringle-Pattison, "Martineau's Philosophy" in The Philosophical Radicals and Other Essays, pp. 78ff.

102. Taylor, "Theism", op. cit., p. 281.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF THE MORAL ARGUMENT

#### I.

#### Varieties of Statement.

On no account should it be inferred that Kant's was the earliest or the only formulation of the argument from the moral aspects of human experience to the fact of God until recent restatements. We have already indicated that this line of reasoning was clearly anticipated in Plato, and in a form in at least two respects definitely superior to that which claimed Kant's allegiance.<sup>1</sup> For with Plato, value is always recognised in its widest and truest reference; his thought moves ever from the experience of the beautiful as well as from the commands of the good to the implications concerning the true. In particular, Beauty holds a position equal if not, in certain of his moods, superior to ethical value as the highest of all realities and our best key to the nature of Being. And, in the second place, in Plato's full view, the witness of values to God is always linked with and harmonised with an argument from design based on mathematical and cosmological considerations. Thus Plato had at his finger-tips, so to speak, all necessary material for a full and rich theism of values. And such a philosophy of values was

clearly implicit in his most central point of view. But he  
1. See, for example, A.E. Taylor, "Theism", in H.E.R.E., Vol. 12, pp. 262ff.; A.S. Pringle-Pattison, The Philosophy of Religion, pp. 89-99, etc.; R.L. Calhoun, in Religious Realism, pp. 220ff. Also references to a portion of the relevant sections of the dialogues, given above, p. 47.

never gave it systematic development. And because it was the teleological argument upon which his mind in its declining years relied for "proof" of the being of God (and because it was this approach and it alone which held any great interest for the more scientifically minded Aristotle), it was this later formal formulation of his thought which directed theistic speculation during the subsequent centuries.<sup>2</sup> For this reason students of the subject are practically unanimous in beginning their considerations of the moral argument with Kant.<sup>3</sup>

But his original reasoning has been the object of a century and a half of vigorous consideration, both critical and reconstructive. With the result that the "moral argument for God" as we meet it in contemporary thought is a far more varied and richer philosophy than Kant anticipated or would have sanctioned. In his exceedingly acute and valuable survey of the material, Dr. Tennant points to seven quite distinct presentations of the argument.<sup>4</sup> As we shall note below, Professor A.E. Taylor lays stress upon at least four or five quite distinct features of "the moral life", each one of which seems to either presuppose or point to an Eternal and Ultimate Ground which we can only define as God.<sup>5</sup>

Among these several ways of employing facts of morality in support of theistic belief, an initial classification is possible depending upon whether a) the facts of conscience and moral experience are made the exclusive, or practically exclusive, ground for belief in God.

2. See, above, p. 47.

3. F.R. Tennant, Philosophical Theology, Vol. II, p. 96, and

references above, p. 48.

4. Op. cit., pp. 93--103.

5. See, below, pp. 168-170; 188-194.



of any possible supporting or complementary evidence from Nature, evolution, the analysis of mind, etc.; or b) these facts (plus, possibly, indications of a moral order in the world) are regarded as elements in a larger philosophy, one set of data though perhaps the most important among a number of relevant data in the construction of an inclusive philosophical view.<sup>6</sup> Statements of the former type may be said to stand very definitely in the Kantian tradition; while arguments of the latter kind usually prove, on careful analysis, to belong more properly to the class of cosmological or teleological proofs. Further, it is of first importance to note that in almost all moral arguments of the former type, there is usually an unrecognised assumption which falls outside the moral considerations themselves and which gives the argument any significant force as a theistic proof. Dr. Tennant is guilty of only slightly too sweeping assertion when he charges that "the plausibility of such arguments, great enough to have captivated great minds, is due to furtive introduction of existential knowledge into a premiss purporting to be purely moral."<sup>7</sup> The introduction of considerations not properly belonging to a strictly moral proof will usually be of one of the following kinds:-

- 1) It is held that the idea of "conscience" or of "moral law" is itself of such a unique and supreme validity that it must carry the reality of its

premises and the conditions which are necessary for

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 6. The failure of theologians to mark this basic distinction  
 7. Op.cit., p. 95. See, Flint, Theism, p. 210ff.



its fulfillment with it. (The argument in its strict Kantian formulation). It is thus seen to be in reality a form of the ontological argument.

- 2) If the Universe is reasonable, it must support the moral imperative in its demands upon conscience, and guarantee that the good will achieves its ends. It is assumed that the Universe is reasonable in this sense. The evidence from morality is thus seen to rest upon a prior unproven assumption; if this assumption is established, it will be from cosmological or other considerations.
- 3) "Conscience" is a fact. It must have an adequate cause. Only a completely perfect moral Will could constitute an adequate source of human conscience. Such a Will is God. Here the reasoning is cosmological in form, from a known effect in the world of experience to an adequate cause in ultimate reality.
- 4) The final proof of the validity of the moral law and the rootage of moral values in the world of ultimate reality is to be discovered in the lives of those who accept the moral law and live as though it were the command of God to ~~them~~--i.e., in what life does to those who obey the moral law. This, of course, is a pragmatic test pure and simple.

Any argument from the existence of a "moral order" as evidenced by the course of history, the discipline of wrong-doing, the moral progress of the race, etc., is on

the face of it merely a particular aspect of the cosmological or the teleological argument--an inference from certain discoverable features of the empirical world to their true cause, or from the semblance of design in human history to the Divine Governor of history. There <sup>is</sup> <sup>a</sup> way of regarding the facts of moral experience which makes no use, direct or unconscious, of other types of argument. But it also should make no claim to prove the existence of God. In essence this attitude is--the demands of conscience and of the moral law are among the most indisputable and surely the most important facts with which life confronts us; we believe that they are rooted in the very heart of ultimate reality and come to us as from the voice of God himself; in that confidence we shall answer their call and trust our lives fully on our faith; but we cannot establish the validity of our assumption and we shall not seek to vindicate in by appeal to cosmological, pragmatic or other evidence. It is the attitude of FAITH--of trust in convictions believed to be true but never fully proven true, of courage to live life in devotion to ideals believed to be realizable but never fully achieved. But such an attitude is not an "argument" for God or a "proof" of God. It is a call to adventure, to action, to faith.

## II.

### Types of the Argument.

Bearing in mind the foregoing considerations and especially the basic classification into arguments which

8. It is at this point that Professor Flint, typical of most students of the moral argument, is guilty of exceedingly superficial analysis. He links the fact of conscience with the evidence of an objective moral order. Theism, Chpt. VII.



place their full reliance upon the data of moral experience and those which do not, the various statements will be seen to fall into the following types:-

### I. The Kantian Form.

I. "The consciousness of the categorical imperative, the moral law, is one of the most indisputable "given" facts of human experience. If that law is to be thoroughly reasonable, it must have the support of the ultimate power behind reality itself. Therefore, it is necessary for the moral consciousness to postulate the existence of God as the ground of the moral law, the source of the moral imperative, and the guarantor of the final triumph of moral values.<sup>9</sup>"

If the assumption of the moral consciousness remains a postulate, a tenet of faith which always lacks full proof or pragmatic vindication, a conviction by which one is willing to live though never wholly established by reason--then, this attitude meets the test proposed in the closing paragraph of the preceding section; it rests wholly upon evidence from morality, but it never amounts to a proof of God. On the other hand, if through these considerations it is sought to establish the reality of God, the advance in reasoning is achieved by use of one of the other of these supplementary lines of argument:-

a. An appeal to the rationality of the world. "If the claims of morality upon allegiance are to be reasonable and not a dastardly deception, there MUST BE vindication of moral fidelity through an intelligent and absolutely righteous Will, i.e. God."<sup>10</sup> Be it carefully noted that the kind

9. For a fuller statement of this position, see above, p. 51.  
10. See above, p. 52f.



of "rationality" which is here assumed is not merely that the world is a cosmos governed by dependable law (such rationality as a thinker of Mr. Bertrand Russell's stamp of mind might find it quite possible to concede with no theistic implications whatever), but that the world possesses the kind of rationality which lends support to moral ends. In brief it is not so much the "rationality" of the world as its "moral ground" which is assured--the very fact the argument seeks to vindicate. If attempt is made to lift this feature of "ethical rationality" from an assumption to a proven or even a probable fact, it will be done, as we have noted above, by appeal to considerations which lie outside the original moral data; and the position becomes a form of cosmological argument.

b. An appeal to the regnant significance and validity of the moral law. It is pointed out that the facts of the moral consciousness are so unique in character and so superlatively important for a reasonable and righteous world that it is unthinkable that they should not be grounded in ultimate reality. If the moral law is claimed to bear the stamp of reality upon its face so that none should be able to miss the marks of its status, then the argument becomes an appeal to intuition; it gives a species of subjective certainty like any mystical insight. But if, as is more usual, it is claimed that there is something within the idea of the moral law itself which guarantees its ontological status, then the position has become a form of the ontological argument. "If the summum bonum has its possibility of realisation

guaranteed by the concept itself, Kant in principle employs the ontological argument in ethics after demolishing it in <sup>il</sup> theology."

I have called this the Kantian form of the moral argument.

## II. Modified

### Kantian

### Statements.

II. Those who have held close to the thought of Kant but have wished to strengthen its cogency have sought to do so either by a more acute and illuminating analysis of the moral consciousness, or by an attempt to show values as grounded in reality by overpassing the Kantian dichotomy between value and existence.

"Conscience is by no means the only feature of our moral experience which suggests metaphysical implications. Our moral aspirations are forever pointing us beyond any goal achievable or even imaginable within human experience; they seem to be directed toward an immortal and eternal good. Indeed it is a characteristic of the moral life that, while it develops within the flux of temporal events, it is dependent for its realization upon a 'good complete and whole' which is never to be found within the time sequence. Moreover, a more careful scrutiny of conscience itself shows on the one hand that it always involves a sense of obligation, not to a law requiring obedience but to an absolute good worthy of worship, such worship as could be given only to a personal spiritual Will; and on the other hand that we would feel no adequate motivation to serve that moral law did it not speak to us as with the voice of



one who is Redeemer and Sanctifier as well as Judge.

And this 'intention of the soul' toward a Person rather than a law becomes most apparent in the consciousness of moral failure and guilt--precisely those characteristics of the moral life which most clearly distinguish man from the sub-human levels and mark him as man. Finally we note the restlessness, the unsatisfied idealism, the inherent 'nostalgia for a Beyond' which characterise all elevated living--the positive feature of the loyalty to right which is the positive obverse of the sense of moral obligation. The inevitability of separation and the loss of all earthly goods through death is only an inescapable confirmation of a sense deep within human consciousness--the recognition  
12  
that our true and final home is not in this world."

It will be apparent that at several points this line of thought carries us over into one or the other of the two following types of moral argument--from the fact of certain features within our consciousness to an adequate cause for their presence there, or from the hankering of our noblest spirits after a transcendent good to the reality of the good as a legitimate satisfaction of their longing. (III and IV below). But if the line of thought remains faithful to the Kantian model, neither of these further types of argument is pressed. The inner nature of the moral consciousness is laid bare, not as a point of departure for an intuitive or causal argument, but simply as an exposition of fact--a proof not that God is but that God should be.

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12. We have outlined the development of the Kantian argument made by A.E. Taylor. See below, p. 168-170; 188-194.

For a less adequate statement, see Flint, Theism, pp. 210-226.



The conviction, that God is, remains a postulate of faith. If the transition is made from the "should be" to the "is", it is accomplished either through the employment of one of the supplementary assumptions outlined under "Ia" or "Ib" above; or else, more properly, through an effort to establish the organic relation of values to reality, and, consequently, the legitimacy of interpreting reality as a whole in terms of value. Under the latter view, the evidence from moral values takes its place as part of the total data available for a larger world-view, and the argument falls within one of our three final classifications (VI, VII, VIII below). It is with this task of vindicating the objectivity of values as integral elements within reality that the more important attempts at restatement have been preoccupied since Kant.<sup>13</sup>

II. From Con-  
science to  
Its Source.

III. "The Moral Consciousness in its rich and manifold nature has already been discovered to be one of the indisputable facts of life. As such, we must conceive it to have a cause adequate to its richest expression. On no account can the rise, the astounding development and the mature flowering of man's moral nature be explained in terms of 'natural selection' or some other purely naturalistic agency. We must hold it to have developed under the influence of a power not less but greater than itself, an infinite moral Will--i.e., God."

The argument in this form is briefly put by Dr.

Tennant:--"Natural selection can only explain the emergence

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13. For example, the theism of A.E. Taylor; see below, p. We shall meet this supplementation of the Kantian argument more adequately put by W.R. Sorley: see below, p. 185ff

and persistence of such moral conduct and principles as possess survival-value for individuals or societies, between which the struggle for existence obtains; and survival value does not pertain to the higher morality.... Inasmuch as natural selection cannot account for the origin of our higher moral sentiments, resort to a supernatural cause is necessary." <sup>14</sup> In this form the reasoning is from effect to adequate cause and falls under the classification of a special example of cosmological proof. It readily merges into one of the more comprehensive types of argument. (VI, VII, VIII below.)

#### IV. From Moral

#### Aspiration to Its Fulfill- ment.

IV. "We have already had occasion to note that our moral aspirations forever point beyond empirical conditions for their realisation and their legitimate satisfaction. They deserve a return of reward for virtue which human life seldom bestows. Much more important, they are themselves marked by what we have called a 'nostalgia for a Beyond', an irrepressible but noble longing for full expression in conditions more ample than this life can provide. Now, there is <sup>no</sup> human desire which is at once basic, universal and persistent which does not have a correlative satisfaction existing in the nature of things. We may instance the need for food, the urge of sex, the desire for companionship, the creative impulses; in each case Nature has provided a fulfillment corresponding to the human need. Indeed we may regard the subjective desires themselves as rising correlative to an already existing objective fact.

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14. F. R. Tennant, op. cit., p. 94. Dr. Tennant gives A. R. Wallace and the Earl of Balfour as examples of those who employed the moral argument in this form.



Carrying this empirically discovered principle only one step farther, we must assume that Nature has provided adequate fulfillment for these, the most delicate and noble and climactic, yearnings which she has bred within human life--including the well-nigh universal longing for immortality itself."<sup>15</sup>

This type of argument, it will be seen, is a deduction from a discovery about the general character of reality achieved on empirical evidence from other sources.

#### V. The Idealistic Form.

V. "There is an absolute moral ideal: it 'exists'.

And 'to exist' means to be 'in' some mind. The ideal is not fully apprehended as to its content by any individual; nor is it realised in any human life. There must therefore be a Divine Mind in which its 'existence' is to be located. Our moral experience implies the 'existence' of an absolute and perfect moral standard, and its 'existence' in turn implies the existence of God."<sup>16</sup>

Clearly the validity of this reasoning rests upon prior acceptance of a particular variety of idealistic metaphysics, an idealism of the Berkeleian school.

#### VI. From the Moral Order.

VI. "The facts of the individual moral consciousness, important as they are, are not the only data of a distinctively moral kind which warrant metaphysical conclusions. We have at our disposal evidence of a far more objective and empirical character. Conscience believes itself commanded by an ultimate moral law. But that law finds concrete embodiment in fact, in the structure of the world itself<sup>15</sup>. See a statement of this position by Principal Pirie of Aberdeen quoted in Flint, *Theism*, p. 408ff. The same argument was frequently employed by Dean Charles R. Brown.<sup>16</sup> Quoted from F. R. Tennant, *op. cit.*, p. 97 (citing Rashdall).



which surrounds human life and forever reminds it of the essentially moral framework within which it is set.

'Virtue does not always meet with its due reward,nor vice with its due punishment in any obvious outward shape;if they did,earth would cease to be a scene of moral discipline; But internal moral laws of an essentially retributive nature are in incessant operation,and show not obscurely or doubtfully what is the judgment of God both on character and on conduct....Virtue tends of its very nature to honour and life,vice to dishonor and death....Virtue may be followed by no external advantages,or may even involve the possessor of it in suffering;but infallibly it ennobles and enriches,elevates and purifies the soul itself....Vice may outwardly prosper and meet only with honour from men,but it cannot be said to be passing wholly unpunished so long as it weakens,poisons,and corrupts the spiritual constitution.'

17

"History affords abundant confirmatory evidence of the objective reality of the moral law.'The welfare of society is dependent on a practical recognition of moral principles--the laws of morality are ~~the~~ conditions of the progress,and even of the existence,of society....The general conditions of social life testify that God loves virtue and hates vice.Then,if we examine history as a whole,we cannot but recognise that it has been in the main a process of moral progress,of moral growth....Our race does on the whole advance in the path towards good....The vices die--the virtues never die....What great good has ever been lost?....The testimony which moral progress involves as to -----

17.Robert Flint,Theism,pp.227-229.

the moral character of God is certain' "

Such a statement points to two indications of the objective character of the moral order--the chastening and moralising influence of the world upon personal character, and the evidence of moral progress in world history. Nature is interpreted as an atmosphere or background appropriate for the fullest development of moral personalities and the slow upward advance of mankind. "Are we justified in saying that the imperfect and puzzling world that surrounds us is an unfit medium for the moral life--if by the moral life we mean the triumph of the spirit?"<sup>19</sup> In stressing the impact of the moral order upon individual life, this type of statement is appealing to the general character of the world; it is a cosmological argument in the larger meaning of that term. In appealing to the progress of mankind, it discovers evidence of God's purpose working itself out through history; it is an example of teleological reasoning.

There remain two other and more comprehensive ways of interpreting the theistic significance of moral values. One aims to validate the status of moral values in reality by an even more complete analysis of the nature of Morality, especially the troublesome issue of the relation of the order of values to the order of Nature. The other places values in a wider setting, regarding them as one element among many among the data of metaphysics, and seeks a more synoptic view of the Scheme of Things.

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18. Robert Flint, op.cit., pp. 229-232.

19. W.R. Sorley, Moral Values and the Idea of God, p. 346. Cp. also A.S. Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God in Recent Philosophy, passim, espec. pp. 200; 308; 400-407; etc.



VII. From Values  
to Reality.

VII. "The experience of values is a vital factor in human life. Since metaphysics must seek to explain man and his essential experiences as well as Nature, any adequate account of reality as a whole must find place for the facts of the moral life within its interpretation. Moral values claim objectivity and their genuine objectivity is suggested in the facts a) that they pertain not to the opinion or feelings of the judging person but to something believed to be true about an objective object or relation, b) that they are universal in authority, and c) that they invariably imply a moral order or Realm of Values. It is thus apparent that moral values are related to reality in two ways:-

1) they are vitally effective influences upon the actual lives of men and women who are themselves manifestations of reality within the time-process; and 2) they are not dependent for their validity upon residence within human minds but assume a Realm of Values which pertains not to the world as it actually is but rather to the world as it should be. Values, therefore, are constitutive at once of reality as an existing system and of ultimate reality. Indeed they appear to be a point of contact between the world-process as we experience it and ultimate reality. They suggest a principle of interpretation for the relation between these two apparently disparate realms--the order of Nature and the order of Values. Such an interpretation can be vindicated as most adequately accounting for the whole of the data which metaphysics must try to explain.



The world can best be regarded as a medium for the realization of goodness by finite selves. Reality as we know it is animated by a universal conscious purpose--the production and training of human souls who may freely realise goodness. The ethical neutrality and apparent injustice of Nature can be justified since 'an imperfect world is necessary for the growth and training of moral beings'<sup>20</sup>. And the conception of God which results is that of one whose will finds expression in the time-process in a twofold purpose--the perfecting of individual human personalities, and the gradual realisation on earth of a perfect Realm of Values, a Kingdom of God. He is one who stands at the door of human life and knocks.

"In this form the moral argument becomes the cornerstone of a more comprehensive Cosmological Argument--an argument to an adequate cause or ground of the whole of reality as far as we can apprehend it."<sup>21</sup>

VIII. An Inclusive VIII. "All of the fore-going argument is true and impor-

Metaphysical tant as far as it goes. But its scope is not quite suf-

View.

ficiently inclusive. The experience of values is only a part, even if the most important part, of man's experience of reality. And moral values are only one, even if the most important, type of value. We must begin with the recognition that reality comes to man through at least two, and possibly three, avenues. It comes to him through Nature, the realm of 'facts' with which the traditional sciences deal. And through the impact of values upon his life. (Possibly

20. W. R. Sorley, Moral Values and the Idea of God, p. 343.

21. Abbreviated from our fuller summary of Sorley's argument, below, pp. 98ff.

reality makes contact with his life in a distinctively third way--through definitely religious experience.) We must look to each of these types of experience for what light it can cast upon an ultimate metaphysical view. From our study of Nature we derive the conception of an 'order' or 'structure' behind the space-time world as we know it; of the interplay of unchanging 'laws' and ever-changing brute 'stuff', by which alone our living, growing universe would be possible; and of a world-process occurring within time through which ever higher and higher types of products are emerging--the process we call evolution. Nature thus points to a Being who is the ground of existence, a God of Order and of Truth, but also one whose purpose can be dimly discerned through the trends in the world's development. A study of the experience of values shows that they are known to us in at least three ultimate forms (to these, perhaps, should be added the distinctively religious experience as a fourth classification); that all types of value are objective and genuine features of 'ultimate reality'; that they come to man with an imperative claim upon his affection, his loyalty, his allegiance, to which all that marks him as man makes instinctive response; that, in their more delicate manifestations at least, they seem to speak to him as though with the voice of a person--yes, a voice of Love; that the whole of reality as we know it--the order of Nature, the order of values, and their interrelation--can best be interpreted as a Realm of Values. Values thus point to a Being whose nature is personal, whose purpose



is the will to good of mankind, who may be thought of as standing at the door of human life knocking, calling men to make the supreme values their concern and their delight, to take his purposes as their own and so to become fellow-creators with him of a Kingdom of Love. Finally a study of distinctively ~~religious experience~~ suggests that here men have known in conscious personal communion that Being whom their interpretation of reality has vindicated for their thought. Indeed it is now recognised that their persistent searching is in itself proof that they have already in some measure found him, or been found of him. The hold which value in each of its forms takes upon our life, prompting us to seek to find it, to understand it, to create it, to possess it, to be fully possessed by it--this 'grip' of value upon our deepest selves is itself the touch of the Living God upon our lives. And that God--He to whom religious experience introduces us--is known as not merely the Author of our world and of our lives and of all that makes life most worth while, but also Redeemer and Sanctifier and Comrade and Friend."

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 22. This type of statement is called by Dr. Tennant an instance of the teleological argument. It is, in substance, the form of argument of his Philosophical Theology, Vol. II. It is also the form of argument of A. E. Taylor in "The Vindication of Religion", in Essays Catholic and Critical, pp. 29ff. See below, pp. 165ff. It is closely parallel to the argument of W. R. Matthews, God in Christian Thought and Experience. It is hardly necessary to state that it is the statement of the moral argument which seems to us most satisfactory. We have attempted a development of it in the summary below, pp. 357ff.



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PART TWO

RESTATEMENTS OF THE MORAL ARGUMENT

IN RECENT BRITISH THEISM

CHAPTER FOURTHE THEISM OF W.R.SORLEYThe Significance  
of Sorley.

We begin our study of contemporary restatements of the moral argument with that of Professor W.R.Sorley. And for several reasons. In the first place as the title of Sorley's principal work, Moral Values and the Idea of God, indicates, his attention is focussed at the very point of our own interest--the bearing of distinctively moral experience upon our thought of God. Unlike Professor Pringle-Pattison and Professor Baillie he does not attempt a survey of the whole field of theism, arguing for the superiority of the ethical approach by setting it in contrast to others; the discussion is strictly confined to the problem of moral values. In the second place his material is marshalled with quite extraordinary skill into clear and logical order. Unlike Professor Taylor he does not permit his mind to be lured from its main course along one and another fascinating but comparatively irrelevant bypath; the argument advances with precision and cumulative power from the first page to the last. For this reason his discussion is a sheer delight to minds blessed (or cursed) with a concern for logical coherence. The critical student can readily set the entire argument into clear outline, follow its progress step by step, and place his finger at the precise points which are crucial for its success of



failure and the points where its statement is least convincing. Finally, granted the limitations within which the author has elected to write and to which he has been rigorously faithful, his argument is perhaps the most convincing of any which we are to study. It therefore furnishes an especially useful background against which to set our later enquiries.

Professor Sorley confesses a preoccupation with problems of moral values during a long life of philosophical reflection.

"The contribution which I have endeavored to make to philosophy is concerned mainly with the significance of ethical ideas. For the most part ethics, and in general the whole region of values, have been treated by philosophers either simply for their own sake or with a view to practical issues, and their investigation has been regarded as supplementary to, rather than as an essential part of, the problem of knowledge and reality. On the other hand theories of reality have been constructed in exclusive dependence upon the data derived from sense-perception and the cognitive conditions required for understanding these data, without any account being taken of the facts of value and the appreciation of values." 1

Here, in the opening sentence of his philosophical confessio fidei, the central concern of all of his constructive writings is clearly indicated--the bearing of moral experience upon the ultimate issues. Indeed, this more specific interest in the metaphysical implications of ethics furnishes a subordinate motif to the main discussion in his earliest published work--a critique of Naturalism published in 1885 which had as its chief purpose "to arrive at an exact estimate of the ethical significance of the theory of evolution." And -----

1. "Values and Reality", in Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 247.

the convictions which represent his mature conclusions are there clearly foreshadowed. In an estimate of the significance of evolution for ethics there occurs this interesting sentence:-

"By the aid of the doctrine of evolution we cannot pass from "is" to "ought", or from efficient to final cause." 2

And in the course of extended quotations from Huxley in which the latter had held to the conflict between the cosmic order and the moral order, Sorley says:-

"Huxley was compelled by his general theory to look upon morality as having arisen out of the very process which it sets itself to oppose. To use his own metaphor, it kicks down the ladder by which it climbed. The two orders are thus strangely related. 'The cosmic order has nothing to say to the moral order, except that, somehow or other, it has given it birth; the moral order has nothing to say to the cosmic order, except that it is certainly bad!'" 3

Sorley here indicates the dilemma which furnishes the pivot for all his later theistic speculation--the apparent conflict between the order of morality and the order of Nature. The conclusion of his reflection on the whole matter of Naturalism is:-

"The claim that man must be interpreted as part of the universe involves the counterclaim that the nature of the universe cannot be understood apart from the distinctive features of man's activity...It cannot be entirely indifferent or antagonistic to morality, for the action of men, which enters into the process, bears the impress of moral ideas.

"These considerations are put forward not as proving the truth of the view that the process of evolution is the expression of a divine purpose. They prove only that purpose and intelligence are somewhere within the process, not that they are present everywhere, or that the whole course of Nature is the expression of one increasing purpose. But the facts leave room for this interpretation, if they do not demonstrate it." 4

2. The Ethics of Naturalism (2nd.ed., 1904), p.326.

3. Op.cit., p.328.

4. Op.cit., p.332.



In the smaller work, Recent Tendencies in Ethics,<sup>5</sup> the same interest in the development of a "moral theology" is again evident and the lines which it might well follow even more clearly hinted.<sup>6</sup> And the more popular little essay, The Moral Life and Moral Worth,<sup>7</sup> finds religious faith essential for the fullest stability and power in the life of morality. But it is in the Gifford Lectures, Moral Values and the Idea of God,<sup>8</sup> that Sorley's central conviction obtains leisurely and adequate development; indeed, in their major import they are a detailed outworking of these earlier suggestions. Essentially the same argument is again sketched in the writer's personal contribution to Contemporary British Philosophy;<sup>9</sup> this essay may be regarded as a summary outline of his larger work. Since practically everything which Professor Sorley has elsewhere written on the theistic problem has been reproduced in amplified and more adequate treatment in his Gifford Lectures, our attention will be concentrated upon them with only occasional supplementary references to his other writings.

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5. 1904. See especially, pp. 131, 133, 136.

6. Recent Tendencies in Ethics, pp. 131, 134, 136.

7. The Moral Life and Moral Worth, 1911, p. 133, etc.

8. 1918; 2nd. ed., 1921.

9. "Value and Reality", in Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, pp. 247ff.



## II.

"Moral Values  
and the Idea  
Of God."

Of the logical and literary merit of this work we have already spoken. The quality of Professor Sorley's craftsmanship in this regard can hardly be better indicated than in Professor Pringle-Pattison's well-deserved tribute:-

" In style and method these lectures are a model of what a philosophical discourse ought to be. There is no obtrusion of technical dialectic--indeed, there is not a sentence the meaning of which is not transparently clear, and the leisurely and deliberate way in which the argument is built up ensures that the sequence of thought is equally plain. While singularly free from any merely rhetorical adornment, the style rises not infrequently to a sober eloquence, impressive by its very restraint. The book is the expression of strong personal conviction; but the author is the fairest of controversialists, never minimising the difficulties of his own position or attempting to snatch a specious advantage over an opponent. Nor does he seek to build upon any argument a superstructure heavier than it will bear, or to present his conclusions as more certain than they are. In all these respects the philosophical temper of the volume is beyond praise, and the unity and coherence of its argument make it a notable contribution to recent theistic discussion." 10

The fundamental premiss which supplies Professor Sorley his point of departure and which underlies the entire argument may be given in his own words:-

" It may be held that our final view of reality must be based upon experience; that this experience must be taken in its whole range, and must not be arbitrarily limited to the data of perception which intelligence works up into science; that the appreciation of moral worth, or of value generally, is as true and immediate a part of our experience as the judgments of perception; and that it, as well as they, forms a part of the data of metaphysics. Further, it may be contended that, just as the data of sense-experience

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10. A. S. Pringle-Pattison, Review of Moral Values and the Idea of God, in Hibbert Journal, 1919, p. 533.

are found to manifest certain regularities from which the 'laws of nature', as they are called, may be inferred, so also in our moral experience a certain law or order can be discovered, with a claim to be regarded as objective, which may be compared with the similar claim made on behalf of natural law. If we take experience as a whole, and do not arbitrarily restrict ourselves to that portion of it with which the physical and natural sciences have to do, then our interpretation of it must have ethical data at its basis and ethical laws in its structure." 11

From these presuppositions the argument advances by three fairly clearly demarked stages. The first, embracing Chapters II through VII, develops a theory of values; it aims to clarify the conception of value, to establish the genuine objectivity of moral values, and to indicate the essential dependence of values upon personality. The second section (Chapters VIII through XI) embodies Sorley's theory of knowledge; its purpose is to show that reality as a whole is of such a character that it can be apprehended only by something in the nature of a "synoptic" vision, and that from such an apprehension there should follow an interpretation which would show the divisions of reality united under a single principle. The concluding portion (Chapters XII through XX) is more definitely metaphysical in character and deals with theory of reality proper; by critical examination of the traditional "theistic proofs" and of the more serious alternatives to theism, the way is cleared for a final defense of the author's own conclusion--that the world may best be interpreted as a training-ground for character, for which Nature is an appropriate though impersonal and indifferent medium, and upon which finite selves



as they make the divine purpose for the realization of values their own purpose may know communion with God and work out their own perfection. The outcome of the long and impressive argument may be given in the writer's own words:-

"The theistic view of the world which I have been considering is definitely an ethical view. It was led up to by an enquiry into the facts of value in the world and by the conception of a moral order of the world; and it issues in a view which finds the moral purpose of the world to be the purpose of a Supreme Mind and which regards finite minds as attaining unity with this Supreme Mind not by the absorption of their individuality but by the perfecting of their character in cooperating with the divine purpose. Other values than the ethical have dropped out of sight in the course of the argument. Yet the general view which has been reached might be extended so as to cover them also. Wherever there is intrinsic worth in the world, there also, as well as in moral goodness, we may see a manifestation of the divine. God must therefore be conceived as the final home of values, the Supreme Worth--as possessing the fulness of knowledge and beauty and goodness and whatever else is of value for its own sake." 12.

### III.

#### The Argument Summarised.

In the concluding chapter Professor Sorley has provided a brief recapitulation of his argument. And, as already pointed out, his essay in Contemporary British Philosophy<sup>13</sup> is in essence a fresh putting of the same case. But neither of these briefer statements exactly follows the order of the argument in full; and, for our own purposes, we may be permitted to attempt a rather free outline<sup>14</sup> of those portions of the whole which bear especially upon

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12. Moral Values, p. 467.

13. "Value and Reality", in Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, pp. 247ff.

14. A somewhat fuller and more faithful summary in which the progress of the argument, chapter by chapter, may be followed is given at the end of this chapter, pp. 132 ff.



the issues with which this thesis is primarily concerned:-

Our purpose is to discover the significance of ethical ideas and ethical experiences for an adequate view of reality as a whole. We shall begin with an enquiry into the nature of values; we shall conclude with the development of a conception of God. This is to reverse the more customary procedure in metaphysical discussions. They usually propose a general metaphysical view derived from cosmological or epistemological considerations, and then attempt to deduce ethical principles from it. Such a procedure of whatever school must fail. Under no circumstances can ethical propositions be derived from non-ethical concepts; the data of the latter is inadequate to the task since it omits the facts of ethical experience and these are *sui generis*. The contrary procedure seeks to advance from a study of ethical ideas to the formulation of an inclusive metaphysical view. The justification of this method--the attempt to find in what ought to be light on what is--is found in the fact that morality is a vital factor in all human experience. Man's initial experience is both perceptive and appreciative; only later are the attitude which issues in scientific generalisation and that which leads on to theory of values differentiated. Therefore, since the experience of values is an important element in human life and metaphysics must seek to explain man as well as Nature, any adequate account of reality as

a whole must find place for the facts of the moral life.

## The Nature of Values.

The theory of values reveals a number of interesting and puzzling problems--the difficulty of classifying values, of establishing the true relations of different types of value to one another, of discovering adequate criteria of moral values, of vindicating the objectivity of the ultimate values. Such a study discloses at least these characteristics of moral values:-

1. The notion of value always pertains to something which actually exists or ought to exist (in contrast, for example, to certain mathematical propositions which imply no necessary relation to existence). From this point of view judgments of value are less abstract than scientific judgments.
2. Every moral judgment claims objective validity independent of the judging subject. It always pertains not to a feeling or attitude of the subject, but to an actual fact about an object or an objective relationship. In that sense, they are also impersonal.
3. By virtue of their claim to objectivity, moral judgments also claim universality.
4. While value is found always in the particular, the individual, it always implies a universal.
5. Moral values are found only in relation to persons. This would seem to be true of all intrinsic values, with the possible exception of natural beauty. But regarding moral values there can be no question;

"It is only to persons that the moral predicate<sup>15</sup> can apply."

6. There is an "absolute" factor in the moral life.

It is not a set of specific precepts but rather a single principle or spirit in moral action which is no less certain because it eludes precise description. It is "the will to good." This it is which furnishes unity in the variety of moral situations.

7. Moral judgments always imply a system of order of moral values. This important fact is apparent from a number of considerations. In the first place, moral judgments seek coherence and freedom from contradiction with one another; and therefore they are appropriate for systematization. Further every sound moral judgment must demonstrate its comprehensiveness by its capacity to take up within itself apparently contradictory judgments and show their place within a larger whole; here again a system is implied. Indeed when the attempt is made to distinguish higher from lower values, we confront the inadequacy of any merely empirical or quantitative basis of comparison; and the need for discovering an order in relation to which each value may be placed.

The Objectivity  
of Values.

Of these characteristics, one in particular has been the subject of special attack--the claim of the moral judgment to objective validity. The objectivity of values has been denied on a number of scores, perhaps principally two--on the ground of their reputed origin, or because of their  
15.0p.cit., p.123.



apparent relativity. With regard to origin, it is said that moral judgments originate in the purely subjective feeling of pleasure or desire, or that they represent merely the reflexion of social mores. Neither suggestion can be sustained. While the sense of values may arise within feeling or be stimulated by desire, the moral consciousness always distinguishes good from bad feelings, high from low desires; it is therefore a criticism of mere feeling or desire. And, as already noted, its reference is always not to an attitude or reaction of the subject but a fact believed to inhere in an object. By the same token, while moral judgments arise within society they always represent a criticism of prevailing mores, else there would be no advance beyond the average standard. With regard to their apparent relativity, moral judgments are relative to factors in the objective situation and change as those factors change. they are not relative to the subject who pronounces judgment. None of these considerations qualifies their essential objectivity.

Positive evidence for the objectivity of moral values may be discovered along at least three lines:-

- a. Moral judgments intend objectivity. They do not pertain to a state of a person judging but to a fact believed to be true of the object or relation judged (as above).
- b. Moral judgments are universal; and in two respects:-
  - 1) "all who judge correctly must find the same moral value in any given situation" <sup>16</sup>, and 2) in every moral judgment there is an appeal to a universal factor

which may be vaguely identified as a "common spirit or purpose."

c. No single good can be confidently determined except with reference to a Chief Good, an organic system of values, a realm of ends which shall embrace both general principles and concrete experiences, both the actual order and the moral order, and unite them in a harmonious whole. Therefore every moral judgment carries reference to a Realm of Values which obviously does not possess full existence within the world as we know it and may never do so. It is an appeal to an assumed system of values. This is the Absolute.

Values and  
Reality.

But what can be affirmed of the actual status of values in reality?

An analysis of reality as we know it would reveal these divisions of reality:-

1. Existents; which in turn can be subdivided into:-

a. Selves, i.e. persons.

b. Similar but less complex unities on an inferior level of the organic world.

c. Things, i.e. inorganic objects.

2. Relations, which are found only in rebus.

3. Values, which are found only in persona.

But our whole study emphasises the underlying connectedness of these different types of reality. Things are not found without relations, nor relations except between things. Values pertain only to persons, but persons realise themselves

only through values. We are driven to a search for a view of the whole. Now, for such an inclusive view, the scientific procedure of analysis plus synthesis is quite inadequate. What is required is a "synopsis", a vision of the whole or insight into the whole more akin to the method of creative art. It is such a synopsis which we employ in knowledge of self and in sympathetic, significant understanding of other selves. But the effort after such an interpretation of the reality of the whole, of the meaning of the world, must employ concepts drawn from our experience--from our experience of Nature, of ourselves as persons, or of value. What categories are so adequate as those of value? We are entitled, therefore, to seek an interpretation of reality in terms of values. Such an interpretation will be valid IF it fits the facts. The final test of this, as of any alternative interpretation, is in experience.

We have already seen that values appear to be one of the three fundamental types of reality as we experience it. They are related to reality at at least two points:-

1. They exist in the consciousness of men and women and are vital forces in determining their conduct. But reality is manifested in persons. Therefore values are efficient factors in existential reality in the time-process.
2. They point to and assume the reality of moral laws and ideals, indeed a Realm of Values. To be sure, these laws, unlike the laws of science, pertain not to the



actual world as it is but rather that world as it should be. They bear a relation to persons almost exactly parallel to the relation of the laws of Nature to material things, except that the latter constitute the realm of matter as it is while moral ideals are the laws of persons as they should and might be. But they are none-the-less constitutive of reality for their validity does not depend upon actual residence within individual human minds; they possess objectivity quite independent of the time-process or their acknowledgment by persons. Since they have reality but not existence in the time-process and since their validity is quite independent of persons, their reality and validity must derive from another source--namely from their status in ultimate reality itself.

Values, therefore, are constitutive at once of ultimate reality and of reality as an existing system. In fact they appear to be a point of connection between the world as we know it and ultimate reality. We are further encouraged to seek in values a principle of interpretation for the relation between the two--the key to the Absolute which is our goal.

#### Alternative Interpretations of Reality.

Of the possible alternatives to Theism as an interpretation of reality, Naturalism may be summarily dismissed since it allows no real status for values which, with us, are fundamental data for interpretation. Two other alternatives remain--Pluralism and Monism. Neither is acceptable.

Pluralism, recognising the reality of finite selves only, cannot account for either the order of Nature or the order of values, since neither can possibly be regarded as due to the activity of finite spiritual units. Even more impotent is it to explain what we have come to regard as the crucial metaphysical problem--the relation of the two orders to one another. Monism fails because it cannot recognize the reality of human freedom and purpose in the cosmos, and consequently the genuine reality of the moral order. For freedom and purpose are indispensable features of a moral universe. We turn to the consideration of the adequacy of theism.

The three traditional theistic proofs--the Cosmological, the Ontological and the Teleological Arguments--are no longer persuasive, both for the reasons urged by Hume and Kant and on even more compelling evidence of inadequacy. Critical examination suggests that all three may best be viewed as variations of the Cosmological  
 16  
 Argument --arguments to an adequate cause of the world. But their view of the world is not sufficiently inclusive; they neglect the central importance of values. As a consequence their arguments and the resulting conceptions of God are alike inadequate. Moreover, a disproportionate emphasis upon Nature (in the Cosmological and Teleological Arguments at least) estops them from giving any satisfactory explanation of the facts of dysteleology, disease and suffering. Finally all are infected with a hedonistic  
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16. In contrast to Kant, who reduced all three to variations of the Ontological Argument.



point of view. But one thing is certain--our world cannot possibly be interpreted as a process whose purpose is the gift of pleasure or the distribution of even-measured rewards for merit.

We are forced to consider the validity of a theism based upon a reformulation of the Moral Argument.

Kant's statement had the merit that it insisted on the recognition of a realm of ends as well as the Realm of Nature in any adequate metaphysical view. Its great weakness was that it set these two orders over against each other as two closed and self-sustained systems. God was required [to] somehow bring them together. A more valid restatement will start from the recognition that they are not two disparate orders but are intimately interrelated, indeed different aspects of a single reality. (The genuine objectivity of the moral order is assumed to have been established by the preceding argument.) The key to the meaning of the whole will be sought in the inner logic of the moral order. It will be urged that the world can best be regarded as a medium for the realization of goodness by finite selves. On this view the ethical neutrality and apparent injustice of Nature can be justified since "an imperfect world is necessary for the growth and training of moral beings."<sup>17</sup>

"Are we justified in saying that the imperfect and puzzling world that surrounds us is an unfit medium for the moral life--if by the moral life we mean the triumph of the spirit--or that it makes impossible the adoption of an ethical point of view in interpreting reality?"<sup>18</sup>

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17. Moral Values, p.343.

18. Op.cit., p.346.



In this form, the moral argument becomes the cornerstone of a more comprehensive Cosmological Argument--an argument to an adequate cause or ground of the whole of reality as far as we can apprehend it. The regularity etc. of the Order of Nature leads to the conception of God as the Great Lawgiver; the discovery of abstract principles behind and beneath the cosmic order suggests the enlargement of our thought of God by the conception of God as the God of Truth; and the objectivity and eternal validity of the Realm of Values completes the conception of God as one whose nature is goodness. The world as a whole is regarded as animated by a universal conscious purpose--the production and training of finite selves who may freely realise goodness. And the freedom of finite selves to serve or to thwart this purpose will be asserted; to be sure, not unqualified freedom, but freedom of self-determination limited only by the conditions of their physical existence and by the character of their own past.

To recapitulate, it is clear that in such a theism certain corollaries are implied:-

1. Nature is the medium for the production and perfection of finite minds.
2. Human beings possess real though limited freedom.
3. The communication of genuine freedom to finite selves must be regarded as genuine self-limitation by God.
4. Divine self-limitation may not preclude complete divine foreknowledge.
5. It is the moral order in which the divine nature and purpose are expressed.

6. Evil, the final perplexity for all forms of theism, while not fully accounted for, is seen to be inevitable in a world where finite selves may choose or reject the good. It is a "temporary failure in the realization of the divine purpose."<sup>19</sup>

"It is not contended that the view solves all questions or that it does not raise problems of its own. The solutions it gives are for the most part general; they offer a principle of explanation rather than an explanation of each event in detail. If particulars can be explained by it, it is mostly by the help of the religious consciousness which claims a more intimate apprehension of God than morality can offer."<sup>20</sup>

The Positive

Finally, what is the idea of God which emerges from

Conception of God, such a study?

First with regard to the traditional divine attributes:-- It is appropriate to say that God is infinite, if by that we mean that there is nothing else of the same nature by which he is limited, or to put the same point a trifle differently that he is not limited by anything other than his own nature. Self-limitation we have found to be most certainly true of God; indeed to deny to him the possibility of assuming self-limitation would really be equivalent to restricting the power of the infinite and thereby to render God finite. By the same token we may say that God is omnipresent in the sense that there is no part of space beyond his power; and everlasting because that power is conceived as continuing through all time. And we may call him omnipotent if we bear in mind our previous reservation--the limitation upon omnipotence



implied in the creation of free finite beings. With regard to the absoluteness of God, the problem is not so simple. "Absolute" in its literal meaning involves the absence of relations. But our conception of God includes the thought of relations with finite selves who possess a measure of independence of the divine will. However this independence is a limited and given one. Therefore we may affirm that God is absolute in the sense that there is nothing outside of him independent of his nature or will.

But to pass on to a more positive conception of God:--This must be reached through an interpretation of reality as we know it. And we have already determined that the more significant aspects of the divine nature are to be discovered through the conception of value. We shall think of him as perfect, i.e. as one in whom there is to be found value or worth in its fulness. And, if it be charged that so to conceive God is anthropomorphism, it may be replied that it is legitimate, indeed inevitable anthropomorphism. Illegitimate anthropomorphism starts with certain human qualities and then argues that the same qualities must be found in the Godhead only in infinite degree; it makes God in the image of man. But our procedure has been to discover certain qualities as necessarily implied in the ground of the world-order as we know it, and therefore necessarily present in the nature of God. It is anthropomorphic only in that it draws on the experiences of human life and the concepts of human thought; as such it is legitimate.



Wisdom may be predicated of God since all knowledge must be his, though immediately and intuitively and without the tedious and faltering labour by which human minds arrive at truth. And most surely God is love, though again with some modification of the meaning of the term as we familiarly employ it in reference to human character. "The love of God is a will to the good of men which has as its end the communion of man with God."<sup>20</sup>

But our final thought of God must be in terms of the embodiment which that love has in the actual world-process, in terms of divine purpose. And that purpose has in view both the perfecting of individual human personalities as they too make the supreme values their concern and their delight; and the gradual realisation within the time-process of a perfect Realm of Values, a Kingdom of God, as human spirits take the divine purpose as their own and become fellow-creators with him. But such cooperation by man with God is always wholly voluntary; it is best conceived as the human response to One who stands at the door<sup>21</sup> of human life and knocks. The final emphasis falls upon the necessity for human enlistment in the divine purposes.

"The spirit of God is conceived as working in and through the spirit of man, but in such a way as not to destroy human freedom.... Love works through freedom. Compulsion or threats interfere with freedom; but in love spirit appeals to spirit in virtue of their fundamental affinity. The soul may be immersed in routine without thinking of the deeper things of life, or it may assert its lower interests and remain deaf to the call of God. But that call is to its essential nature and spiritual destiny; and, if the call is answered, the soul finds its freedom in fulfilling the divine purpose." <sup>22</sup>

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20. Op. cit., 491.

22. Moral Values, p. 495.

21. Cp. Pringle Pattison, Idea of God, p. 292. See, below, p. 313.

## IV.

The Argument  
Criticised.

It is difficult to bring serious criticism against a position with which one finds one's mind in such essential agreement. In concluding our comment on Kant we suggested four questions by which any subsequent statement of the moral argument might be confronted.<sup>23</sup> Our criticism of Sorley may well move forward by examining his success in meeting these four difficulties.

## a. Objectivity

It is hardly an overstatement that the validity of of Moral Values. Sorley's whole position rests on the objective character of moral values; and the great burden of his early discussion is to establish that objectivity beyond any possible question. We have already outlined the three arguments advanced in support of this central contention. They are reproduced though in slightly modified form in Professor Sorley's later theistic apologetic, and may be quoted from that in abbreviated statement:-

1. "Value is objective because it is a characteristic which belongs to the personal life.....Persons must be regarded as belonging to the objective order, the order of reality; and they are the bearers of value, for values are to a certain extent manifested in their lives and characters." 24

2. "Life is a process of striving after values which are not yet attained, which in their perfection may never be attained--may even be unattainable--in the conditions of personal life so far as we are acquainted with them in experience. It is easy to see that the actual beauty and goodness and truth which experience reveals are objective; but what of the ideals which claim the allegiance of persons without being manifested by them, which in actual life remain

23. See above, p. 72.

24. "Value and Reality", p. 254.



a 'not yet' and may be a 'never quite'? How and in what sense can we assert objectivity of them?

"This question can be answered best by comparing ideals of value with the conceptions which are reached by science and are spoken of as 'laws of nature'.....The objectivity claimed by moral laws and by ideals of value generally is similar. Its reference is not to the feelings or desires of the person who may formulate these laws or ideals. Nor, on the other hand, is that validity dependent on the extent to which they are realized in actual life... ..At the same time, while the moral law and the law of nature are both objective, their relation to actual events is not the same. The law of nature describes actual events; unless it did so with a high degree of accuracy it would not be accepted as valid. But the moral law does not profess to describe actual conduct; its relation to it is not descriptive but imperative....The imperative of duty is an imperative because what ought to be is not always actual. But the validity of ethical principles, like all validity, is a validity for reality.....

"Natural law and ethical principles are equally objective, but they differ in the objective orders to which they apply and in their modes of application... ..Values apply to personal life, and their validity consists not in describing how persons comport themselves, but in expressing an ideal which they should realize." 25

3. "Values are objective in the sense of belonging to--being a factor in or aspect of--the system of reality which it is the aim of philosophy to understand. 'They belong to the sum total of reality as an existing system'." 26

One explanatory comment should be added. The second proposition above turns on the author's distinction between 'existence' and 'reality' ; a rather detailed analysis and definition of the two terms is appended to the relevant section of Moral Values and the Idea of God. Suffice it to say that in his usage "reality is nearly equivalent to existence, but with two differences.....first, it marks its object off from the imaginary,.....second, reality and real are used not only of existing things...but also of those



factors in the conditions and behavior of existing things to which we do not assign existence by themselves, although without them the things would not be what they are." The author cites as illustration 'gravitation', and the mathematical and logical relations which are constitutive of the nature of the universe.<sup>27</sup> The difference between such laws of nature and the laws of value is in their reference to the actual existing order, and this difference has been pointed out above.

It is not our purpose to submit the argument to criticism in unessential detail, but to consider its essential validity. For example question might be raised whether he has advanced three or really two considerations in its support, whether the third proposition adds anything to the first and second. If values by virtue of their residence in persons and influence upon persons share the status of persons in the order of reality, and moral laws derive their validity not from their realization in the order of existence but from their status in ultimate reality, it would seem obvious that "they are objective in the sense of belonging to--being a factor in or aspect of--the system of reality which it is the aim of philosophy to understand". The third proposition is then implied in the predecessors and becomes superfluous. The fact that the author's putting of the three arguments is not exactly paralleled in the corresponding section of the larger work and that he seems to waver from three to two would suggest -----  
 27. Moral Values, pp. 206--213.

some uncertainty on his own part about the classification. But that is a very small point.

The first section of the proof is clearly the most convincing. To employ Sorley's own illustration, when I say "the sky is blue" and "the sky is beautiful", I regard myself as making two assertions of fact. Both pertain to an objective existent, indeed different features of the same existent. In either case I may be mistaken. In the one case it would be my sense of colour which would be defective; in the other case, my capacity for appreciating beauty. But the sky either is or is not blue; it either is or is not beautiful. We agree, "the goodness of the good man is as objective as the man himself."<sup>28</sup> It would seem that no theory other than a rather crude form of Naturalism would be able to deny the genuine objectivity of values, their status within existent reality, in that sense.

The case for the objectivity of the Moral Order--the system of ideal and as yet unrealised values--is not so clear. There can be no doubt that an analysis of the moral judgment reveals its implicit if not explicit appeal to such an ultimate and ideal order. But its presence in human thought does not prove its status in reality; for Professor Sorley does not propose to include within his rubric of 'reality' ideas which are merely 'imaginary',<sup>29</sup> however great their actual influence upon human action. It is not quite clear how the reality of the ideal order of values is established beyond ideas in human imagination. -----  
28. "Value and Reality", p. 255. 29. Moral Values, p. 212.



That there should be such an order, we grant; but is there? It would seem that the proof of the objectivity of the moral order is a corollary from the validity of the larger metaphysical position for which Professor Sorley is arguing. Until that has been established, the reality of the moral order remains a postulate, though a postulate for the truth of which there is no little important evidence.

In our judgment the argument for the objectivity of values could have been strengthened at one point. It suffers from what we shall repeatedly urge is the most serious single weakness in Professor Sorley's position (as we have already urged it against Kant)--his exclusive attention to moral values. An advance to the idea of God from a philosophy of values as a whole has two advantages. In the first place it strengthens the case for their objectivity. It is true that moral values pertain largely not to the actual order of events as it is, but rather as it should be. Their reality is not descriptive, but imperative. They represent a claim upon the future. But surely the same is not true of values of truth. If there is a system of truth parallel to the order of morality, it pertains in large measure to the world as it actually is; at least clear evidence of the reality of such a system is discoverable in the order of our world. (Here, too, may be an important and fruitful point of contact between the scientific order and the order of morality.) Even with regard to values of beauty, they seem to represent less a



claim upon the future,"an existential possibility rather than reality",than moral values. The fact that moral values more than any other type of value pertain to persons and can win existence within the time-process only through the instrumentality of persons is a point of strength for Professor Sorley's case in another connection,but a source of weakness here. It renders their objectivity more difficult to vindicate. It is true that the ideal order of the values of beauty will not be fully realized in our world without human cooperation. But beauty is present in the world as an existent;and without dependence upon us.Man may be necessary for its appreciation,he is not necessary for its creation. And it is at least possible that an argument for a system of beauty-values could be built up from the facts of natural beauty only;and so the objectivity of that system vindicated.

Secondly,the more obvious objectivity of the orders of truth and beauty gives to their values a kind of imperative claim upon human recognition as well as human service that moral values do not possess. A violation of the system of truth (as found,for instance,in a law of Nature) may bring more immediate and drastic punishment than a violation of one of the higher laws of morality. (It is this fact,of course,which gives moral laws their claim to supremacy in the hierarchy of values--their non-compulsory character,their dependence upon voluntary allegiance.) For this reason the reality and objectivity of the order of truth is more unmistakeable. Values of

beauty stand to some degree in the same case. But of this we shall have more to say in the sequel.

b. The Realm of Values and the Realm of Nature. "Reality, besides the realm of existing things and their orderly relations, includes something more--the realm of values.....For convenience we may speak of the order which science discovers in the existing world as the causal order; and in the system of values..we may restrict ourselves to the moral order. A theory of reality must recognize both the causal order and the moral order, and try to reach some idea which will combine and harmonize them.....

"These orders differ entirely in their laws; experience does not show any harmony between them, and yet they do not simply belong to different worlds, for they meet in the experience of conscious minds who acknowledge the equal validity of both. A philosophy should be able to exhibit them as complementary aspects of a single reality."<sup>30</sup>

This may be given as a fair summary of Sorley's position on the relation of values to the realm of Nature which is the object of scientific inquiry. "Two disparate orders"; no harmony between the two orders; their meeting point within the mind of man. Generally speaking, the authors attitude toward science is perhaps a trifle suspicious and even derogatory;<sup>31</sup> Dean Inge's call to task at this point is not without some justification.<sup>32</sup> Professor Sorley had made his principal criticism of Kant that the latter had regarded the realm of Nature and the moral realm as two disparate and independent systems, and had required the postulate of

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30. "Value and Reality", pp. 258, 260.

31. See, espec., Moral Values, pp. 110; 166; 222; 241; etc.

32. Review in Mind, 1919, pp. 234ff.



God as "the Great Reconciler" to "weld them together."<sup>33</sup>  
 It might perhaps not unfairly be urged that Professor Sorley himself is guilty of almost the same unfortunate bifurcation of reality. He employs the same terms in description of his theory as in criticism of Kant's-- "disparate orders", "No harmony between them". Their meeting ground is in the mind of man as well as in the fact of God; but the critical discussion of this portion of Kant's argument might be directed with the alteration of hardly a syllable against the author's own treatment of the relation between the two orders. Here we confront an instance of what we have described as one of the most unhappy features of the Kantian heritage--the dichotomy<sup>34</sup> between Nature and values.

We would suggest that this difficulty might have been overpassed and the true relation of facts and values more adequately set forth by two modifications in the argument (modifications which involve no change in its fundamental positions, indeed which are thoroughly harmonious with the argument as it now stands)--by a more comprehensive treatment of the nature of value, and by a closer attention to the evidences of purpose and meaning within the order of Nature.

1. Sorley seems to hold that the sole meeting-point of the two orders is in human consciousness, and that the meaning of their relationship must be discovered solely<sup>35</sup> through an interpretation of man's moral experience. But -----

33. Moral Values, pp. 334, 335. 35. "Value and Reality", p. 248ff.  
 34. Above, p. 66.



surely there are at least two other points at which values contact with the order of Nature--in the systematic structure of the Universe itself, and in the facts of natural beauty. If the scientific study of the data of Nature reveals an "order" of relations and principles which has reality independently of specific existents and yet without which "existing things would not be what they are", then this "order" is an element within the system of truth-values. Indeed it comes to be valued in and for itself; hence the significance of "pure scientific research" as the dispassionate quest for truth. It precisely meets Sorley's criterion of genuine truth-value; "it is knowledge of truth, or truth as known, that has value."<sup>35</sup> Again, natural beauty is a fact of the order of Nature, not merely a fact of value within the mind of the beholder. By the author's own argument, the beauty of the sky is as truly objective a feature of the sky as the blueness of the sky. It pertains to the natural order of which science seeks to render an account. And if it is not as easy to discover scientifically the principles of beauty as the principles of color or of structure, the task should not be surrendered because of its difficulty. We should retain, at least as a postulate, the possibility of discovering a systematic order of principles of beauty which might stand "on all fours" so to speak with the recognized systems of scientific principles--as descriptive of the order of Nature as it is, not merely of the human order as it should

be.

35. Moral Values, p. 31.

2. But the relation of "facts" and "values" is most truly viewed, and the dichotomy of Nature and values most adequately reconciled through study of the levels of reality, by the development of what is often referred to as a "doctrine of levels" or a theory of "emergent evolution". From this view, reality as it manifests itself in the total world of human experience is seen not as two disparate and independent types but rather under the figure of a scale of not two but several types of reality with the material order of scientific generalization at one end and the order of pure and absolute values at the opposite end, as marking<sup>36</sup> the limit toward which the world-process points and presses.<sup>36</sup> Values are seen to appear or "emerge" within the world<sup>d</sup>-process as increasingly vital factors in its upward advance from lower to higher levels; they are organic to the order of Nature since they appear in, and are indispensable influences upon the progress of, the total world-process which has as its foundation-level, so to speak, the system of Nature as science knows it.<sup>37</sup>

At a number of points, Professor Sorley seems to hover on the edge of considering if not accepting this point of view; so much so that it may be considered, I think, as in no sense incongruous with his own position. For example, in the briefer statement he says:-

"The causal order and the moral order do not exhaust the complex system of conceptions required for the explanation of experience.... They have been selected in order to bring out a certain opposition which is not lessened by pointing to intermediate or

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36. Cp. Sorley's characterization of values as "the limit toward which the nature of persons points & presses." Moral Values, p. 239. 37. See below, p. 368.



mediatizing conceptions...." 38

But it is our conviction that such necessary intermediate and mediatizing conceptions do cast important light on the relation of the two sets of conceptions which seem to stand in such sharp and unrelated antithesis to each other. In any event it is obvious that an account of reality without regard to these intermediate and mediatizing conceptions is an abstraction, perhaps a dangerous abstraction.

Again, in discussing the fact of purpose, Professor Sorley stresses the inadequacy of mechanism to account for the appearance of new and unpredictable types of existents, and outlines the theory of emergent evolution as he traces the advancing levels of existents from inorganic matter  
39  
through life to mind. The argument aims to disprove mechanism and demonstrate the reality of purpose. The foundation is clearly laid for a philosophy of values in terms of emergence, but the analysis is not carried forward from the level of mind to the next higher level of spirit or values; and the fuller philosophical implications of the data are not drawn.

Once more, toward the close of the development of the idea of God, there occur these interesting sentences:-

" Within reality as a whole a distinction may be drawn between higher and lower, more or less complete or perfect, manifestations of reality. The distinction is expressed in the old concept of the scale of being; at present it is more familiar to us as the distinction

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38. "Value and Reality", p.259.

39. Moral Values, pp.403--408.

See also Professor Sorley's exceedingly interesting contribution to a discussion of "Purpose and Mechanism", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1911-12, pp.216ff.



between degrees of reality. If we attempt to draw out a scale or degrees of this kind, the moral order or moral law may be placed at the summit, and a direct inference may be made to God as the conscious ground of this moral order. The argument in this form is well known; but I have not relied upon it, chiefly for one reason in particular. If the moral order by itself is made to involve the idea of God, then this idea is apt to have for its content simply the moral order... ..My argument accordingly had a wider range. It was founded not on the moral order by itself but on its relation to the order of existing things. Since existence and value belong to the same universe they must have the same ultimate ground." 40

But we would hold that a proper interpretation of the scale of being or the degrees of reality would reveal an idea of God based not on "the moral order by itself", but on "the relation of the moral order to the order of existing things." Indeed, we would suggest that Professor Sorley does not adequately set forth the relation of the moral order to the order of existing things. It is true that existence and value must have the same ultimate ground since they belong to the same universe; but their relation within that universe may be shown to be far more intimate and less antipodal than this treatment of the degrees of reality would indicate. We shall try to outline such an alternative interpretation  
41  
in our concluding summary.

3. Moral and  
Other Values.

Perhaps enough has been said of Sorley's treatment of values other than moral. While consideration is almost entirely restricted to values of the latter type, it is repeatedly held that the main lines of the argument would apply with equal validity to a philosophy of value in

general. "Other values than the ethical have dropped out

40. Moral Values, p. 479. Cp. also, the description of his own position as an "extension of the cosmological argument", p. 348. (See above, p. 108.)

41. See, below, pp. 358-368.

of sight in the course of the argument. Yet the general view which has been reached might be extended so as to cover them also. Wherever there is intrinsic worth in the world, there also, as well as in moral goodness, we may see a manifestation of the divine. God must therefore be conceived as the final home of values, the Supreme Worth-- as possessing the fulness of knowledge and beauty and goodness and whatever else is of value for its own sake." <sup>42</sup>

Moral values are selected for exclusive study because they are held to be the supreme type of value; their supremacy at the apex of the hierarchy of values is by virtue of their greater universality and catholicity than values of beauty or truth.

"Morality is of such great importance among the values because, as I have put it, it is not envious or exclusive. It does not, like the other values, depend upon certain special circumstances or some special endowment of intellect or skill. It can be exhibited in any circumstances whatever." <sup>43</sup>

"Knowledge is the same for all....except this, that, before it can be attained, it may require a concentration of mind and a culture of the intellect which are possible only to those who have not only a fit endowment of mental faculty but also some amount of freedom from the ordinary cares of life and leisure to devote themselves to intellectual pursuits.....

"Much the same may be said of the aesthetic values. It is true that in itself beauty is as little envious as any good....But it is rarer than we could wish, and to enjoy it the intervention of material instruments is often necessary. Many of the beauties of nature, most of the beauties of art....are thus, like the intellectual values, limited by external conditions which the social order has not been able to put within the power of all but reserves for those who are favoured by economic circumstances.

"Moral values are not limited in this way..... Whatever the circumstances there is always a right to be done, a moral value to be realized.....Riches and



poverty, health and sickness, power and subjection are merely different conditions in which goodness can be cultivated and moral values brought into existence. The universality of the moral value vindicates its rank as the most catholic among the varieties of value." 44

Dean Inge as a loyal Platonist has held this portion of Professor Sorley's argument up for special scorn, instancing Socrates and Spinoza, Bohme and Burns, Wordsworth and Charlotte Bronte from a long catalogue of those who, in poverty of circumstance, have sought truth and served beauty.<sup>45</sup> And not a few modern psychologists would contend that the realization of values in character was as heavily dependent upon favorable native equipment as outstanding intellectual achievement or noteworthy artistic production. To be sure Sorley seems here to be speaking of the appreciation rather than the creation of non-moral values, but Dean Inge's criticism has truth in it. It is probably true that a case may be made for the supreme rank of moral values because of their greater dependence upon human cooperation for their realization as well as because of their greater catholicity<sup>46</sup>; but it is a rank of primus inter pares.

It must not be thought that Professor Sorley is blind to the importance of beauty and truth and their right to stand almost if not quite on a level with values of morality. This equality or near-equality is frequently asserted and a number of passages in which the relation and interdependence of the various values are developed merit quotation.

"Every kind of value is or may be related to character and conduct....All values--the intellectual  
 44. Op.cit., p.48--49. 46. See, above, p.100; & below, p.133  
 45. In a review of Moral Values and the Idea of God, in Mind, 1919, p.234ff.



and the aesthetic, among the rest--have also a share in moral value, because they heighten personal worth and are, to some extent at least, within the reach of personal endeavour. The scholar's life and the life of the artist are examples of the moral life just as much as the lives of the philanthropist or of the ordinary good citizen." 47

"The way is not from the categorical imperative alone. From nature and art and knowledge men have risen to the contemplation of God and found in him the key to the problems of life." 48

"A full view of the worth of life must take all values into account, not merely those which, from their specific reference to character and volition, are called moral values.....

"The independence of the different values, moreover, is only partial, and it is not entirely onesided. We have seen how, in certain conditions, morality falls back upon the other values, and takes them as its ideals, so that the good will finds satisfaction in their pursuit and attainment.... The pursuit of truth and of beauty are themselves modes of moral activity....

"Human nature is so imperfectly unified that a man may show high devotion to one region of values and treat all the others with neglect or contempt. But he does so at his peril.... Morality cannot be isolated from any part of life. The ideas of good and evil which direct the lives of men are also formative influences upon their artistic production in picture or poem or building. Nor can knowledge claim to be completely independent of character. Character determines interest, and interest selects its objects and its method. It was not mere fancy that led the theosophist and alchemist to hold that the mind that would find out the hidden things of the world must be purged from bodily and selfish desire, and that the philosopher's stone can be touched by none but clean hands. Only the pure in heart can see God." 49

"Wherever there is intrinsic worth in the world, there also, as well as in moral goodness, we may see a manifestation of the divine. God must therefore be conceived as the final home of values, the Supreme Worth--as possessing the fulness of knowledge and beauty and goodness and whatever else is of value for its own sake." 50

Professor Sorley is to be criticised therefore not because he himself lacks appreciation of the values of beauty and

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47. Moral Values, p. 165.

48. Op.cit., p. 507.

49. Op.cit., pp. 510-11.

50. Op.cit., p. 467.

truth and is unwilling to make place for them in the category of ultimate and absolute values. Rather the defect is in his chosen method. By concentrating attention too narrowly upon problems of morality, the companion values fail to make their just and needed contribution to the total argument; the perspective is slightly falsified and the conclusions robbed of their full range and power. It is further support for the conclusion which our examination of Kant forced upon us--any adequate approach to the idea of God through values must rise from a philosophy of values as a whole, the experiences of beauty and of character and of truth and of religion each making its gift of insight to the final picture. Because of its failure to do so, Professor Sorley's case with all of its power and appeal is somewhat impoverished at the familiar two points where a wider purview might have brought it added strength:-- in the vindication of the objectivity of the realm of values; and in the impression of the imperative claim of that objective order upon human recognition and human allegiance.

#### d. The Problem of Evil.

Lastly, what of Professor Sorley's success in reconciling his theistic belief with the troublesome realities of disease, suffering and evil in human experience? There is no point of the discussion where the writer's complete candour is more refreshing and reassuring. He claims no complete or final light on the problem of evil. Such explanation as can be offered pertains primarily to the facts of evil in general; for the most part it brings no



release for the perplexity of the individual. And it is in individual experience that we actually confront the bafflement of evil; it is here that its burden is most intolerable. But for the individual the final recourse is to light cast from a source beyond the purview of this study, from distinctively religious experience.

Professor Sorley's attitude toward evil embraces the following seven points:--

1. The purpose of the world is not to be found in the gift of happiness or pleasure to finite spirits. It cannot be interpreted from hedonistic premisses. 51
2. Nor can the world be interpreted as a system in which happiness is distributed in exact ratio to merit. This is clearly not the actual character of our world. 52
3. The starting-point for an understanding of evil must be found in the recognition that the purpose of life is the achievement of character by free finite selves. In that view, "the world will be contemplated as providing a medium for the realisation of goodness". 53
4. For such a purpose, an imperfect world is absolutely necessary if the higher values of life are to be sought for their own sake, and realised by free and voluntary effort with no assurance of reward beyond the doing of one's best. Here may be discovered some light on what we term "natural evil". 54
5. Further, the possibility of evil is implicit in a world where finite spirits may freely choose or reject the best. Actually, where the lower values lure free and fallible men, the doing of evil becomes inevitable. (There is involved the voluntary self-limitation of the divine activity.) Here is to be found the source of most of what we call "human evil". 55
6. Suffering as such is not necessarily an evil from which no good may be won. The greatest spirits have not found it so. Indeed it is most often the spectator rather than the participant who most rebels against the injustice of unmerited pain. 'That which we suffer ourselves has no longer the same air of monstrous injustice and wanton cruelty that suffering wears when we see it in the case of others.' (56) 57

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 51. Moral Values, pp. 327; 341. 52. *Op.cit.*, p. 341.  
 53. *Op.cit.*, pp. 342; 446; 466. 54. *Op.cit.*, 343; 421.  
 55. *Op.cit.*, pp. 461; 466. 57. *Op.cit.*, 345.  
 56. R.L. Stevenson, Letters, Vol. I, p. 370 (quoted by Sorley, p. 345).



7. The foregoing considerations cast not a little important light on the inevitability of suffering in a world with the purpose which our world seems to reveal. In some measure at least they 'solve the problem for the Universe'. But they do not solve the individual's problem as he confronts this and that instance of unmerited evil in personal experience. So far as his perplexities win solution it is usually not by philosophical reflection or a truer reading of the moral order, but through that unique power for the practical transcendence of evil which is the unique gift of the experience of religion at its highest. 58

The author's final conclusions in the matter may be given in his own words:-

" Are we justified in saying that the imperfect and puzzling world that surrounds us is an unfit medium for the moral life--if by the moral life we mean the triumph of spirit--or that it makes impossible the adoption of an ethical point of view in interpreting reality? I do not say that experience of the relation of natural forces to moral ideas and moral volitions justifies of itself the inference to divine goodness at the heart of all things. The mere fragment of life with which we are acquainted is too scanty to bear so weighty a superstructure. All I have argued is that our experience is not inconsistent with such a conclusion. And, if there are other reasons for saying that goodness belongs to the ground of reality, and that the realization of goodness is the purpose and explanation of finite minds, then the structure of the world as we know it is not such as to make us relinquish this view; on the contrary a view of the kind is supported by the general lines of what we know about the world and its history." 59.

" It is not contended that the view solves all questions or that it does not raise problems of its own. The solutions it gives are for the most part general; they offer a principle of explanation rather than an explanation of each event in detail. If particulars can be explained by it, it is mostly by the help of the religious consciousness which claims a more intimate apprehension of God than morality can offer." 60

" The conclusion of the central argument of this book gives a point of view from which reality may be interpreted without the incongruities into which other theories fall; and it succeeds in making intelligible just those features of experience which it is most difficult to combine into a harmonious

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58. Op., cit., pp. 468; 505. "Value and Reality", p. 266.  
59. Moral Values, p. 346. 60. Op., cit., p. 468.

view of the whole. At the same time, as I have repeatedly admitted, it does not solve all problems or remove all difficulties. It does not explain each particular situation, or the unique character of any particular person. Our knowledge of the details and of the issues of life is far too meagre to admit of our having more than a general principle of explanation. So far as the individual problem gets a solution at all, it is usually through the religious faith of the individual person; and there are few things more venturesome, or more offensive, than the attempt of any one else to interpret for him 'the ways of providence'." 61

These somewhat long quotations have been given because they lead us to a final and perhaps the most important comment upon the theism of Professor Sorley. It will be seen that, in the writer's own view, the philosophy of moral values is not complete in itself. In its every statement it points beyond itself--to religious experience and the need for a philosophy of that experience. 62 And not alone for light on this final stumbling-block to all ethical theism--the specific incidence of evil upon the personal life. But also, it would seem, for that unity and constancy and confidence without which moral effort fails of its highest effectiveness and moral enthusiasm of its greatest buoyancy and kindling contagion.

"The conception of a moral order of the world, and of this order as rooted in the nature of God, gives to the moral life the unity and power of which it stands in need. It confirms the postulates of morality: the spiritual nature of God vindicates the supremacy of the spiritual factor in human life; the relation in which all men, as spiritual beings, stand to God gives meaning and validity to the idea of the Brotherhood of men.....In this way the religious conception of the world gives unity to the moral life. And it also gives it power. Moral enthusiasm can be fed only by the hope that effort is not in vain; and belief in God gives confidence that goodness will prevail." 63.

61. Moral Values, pp. 504-5.

62. See, also, "Value and Reality", p. 266.

63. The Moral Life and Moral Worth, p. 133.



With all of its clarity and cogency (and in this critical section, criticism has perhaps somewhat overbalanced just appreciation), Professor Sorley's argument falls short of maximum adequacy not merely because it neglects the evidence of those "intermediate and mediatizing conceptions" which we regard as of great importance<sup>64</sup> ; nor because it under-<sup>65</sup> values the significance of truth and beauty. It fails of maximum adequacy because, by the definition of its scope, there is excluded from its purview the final and climactic type of human experience in which all appreciation of value culminates and to which morality points for its completion and its richest meaning. Our conclusion is that the most complete philosophy of values must include within its view the experiences of religion, and find place within its final interpretation for religion's vision of the meaning of the whole.

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 64. See above, p. 121.  
 65. See above, p. 123f.



NOTE TO CHAPTER FOUR  
SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT OF  
"MORAL VALUES AND THE IDEA OF GOD"

From Values to  
Reality.

Our purpose is to discover the significance of ethical ideas and ethical experiences for an adequate view of reality as a whole. We shall begin by a study of the experience of values; we shall conclude with the development of a conception of God. This procedure reverses the more customary sequence in metaphysical discussions; they usually propose a general metaphysical view based on cosmological or epistemological considerations, and then attempt to deduce ethical principles from it. The latter procedure--whether Rationalistic, Idealistic or Naturalistic, and whether holding ethics to be definitely ancillary to general metaphysical principles in the manner of Descartes, or claiming to discover ethical norms implicit in more general concepts as did Hegel-- must fail. Ethical propositions under no circumstances can be derived from non-ethical concepts; the data of the latter is inadequate to the task because it omits the facts of moral experience. However, the contrary procedure here attempted--the advance from a study of ethical ideas to the formulation of an inclusive metaphysical view--is not altogether new. It was followed by Plato in the Republic, and suggested by Lotze in all his writings. The

justification of this method--the attempt to find in what ought to be light on what is--lies in the fact that morality is a vital element in all human experience. Indeed there is a sense in which values are prior to the cognition of facts in the development of mind; at least the initial experience is at once perceptive and appreciative, only later are the two attitudes differentiated. Therefore parallel to the order of Nature which is systematised in scientific knowledge is the experience of values suggesting a complementary system. Any adequate account of reality as a whole must find place for the facts of the moral life. (Chapters I and II)

#### Types of Values.

The attempt to classify values as they are met in familiar human experience reveals a number of alternative bases of classification. The well-known distinction between intrinsic and instrumental values is less significant than might be desired because so many things seem to possess value of both types. Similarly there is no universal agreement on the superior importance of permanent over transient values. More significant is the differentiation of values in terms of their catholicity or exclusiveness. Generally speaking, values dependent upon material goods require monopoly for their full enjoyment while the values which mankind has agreed to recognize as the higher--beauty, truth, goodness--may be more universally possessed. However, of these,

moral values are the most catholic since neither special gifts nor special means are required for their cultivation by any man. The most usual division of values classifies them according to the nature of the objects or ideals to which they are referred, as values of happiness, of beauty, of truth, of goodness. Happiness is an unsatisfactory norm of judgment since it embraces so varied meanings; rather is it to be thought of as attaching to value of every kind. The autonomous status of ~~truth~~ as an intrinsic value may be established, since it is truth as such and not merely knowledge for its instrumental use which men seek. Similarly the status of ~~beauty~~ and ~~goodness~~ as ultimate values can hardly be disputed, though at first thought they are not readily distinguished from each other. But, they may be differentiated either in terms of the attitudes they evoke (admiration for beauty but approval for goodness), or in terms of their respective objects; a thing of beauty is valued in and for itself with no regard to its maker, or its purpose but a good act will win approval only when viewed "from its inner side", i.e. in terms of the intention of the doer and as one element in a system of moral conduct. Again when we try to distinguish values as higher or lower we confront the inadequacy of any empirical or quantitative basis of comparison and the need for discovering a system to which all values may be related. (Chapter II)



## Are Moral Values Objective?

The objective validity of moral judgments is often denied on one of two grounds--either on the ground that such judgments originate in the feeling of pleasure or in subjective desire not in objective fact, or on the ground that such judgments are merely the reflection of the social mores. Neither objection can be sustained. For the moral consciousness distinguishes good from bad desires and good from bad pleasures; it is always directed not to the sensations of the subject but a quality in the object. Similarly, moral judgments appear within society but as criticisms of prevailing standards, else there would never be genuine moral advance. The attribution of value always applies to an object assumed as actually existing, and not to a mere relation between objects or a quality of an object. (Chapter III)

Further difficulties arise in the effort to propose adequate criteria of Moral Value. The following are suggested:-

- a. Every moral judgment claims objectivity as independent of the judging subject, and therefore as both universal and impersonal.
- b. Moral judgments seek coherence, freedom from contradiction with one another, and therefore appropriateness for systematisation.
- c. Every sound moral judgment must demonstrate its comprehensiveness by its capacity to take up within itself apparently contradictory judgments and show their place within a system. (Chapter IV)

To these three formal criteria of moral values may be added the fact that they are always found in relation to persons. This is true of all intrinsic values (with the possible exception of natural beauty). But regarding moral values there can be no question; "it is only to persons that the moral predicate can apply." (Chapter V)

Further doubt is cast upon the claim of moral judgments to objectivity on the ground of their relativity. This objection arises from an inadequate criticism of the concept "relative." Moral judgments are not relative in the sense of relative to the subject who pronounces judgment; in this regard their claim to objectivity is in exactly the same case as judgments of fact, the knowledge of things and relations. They are relative to other factors in the objective situation, both because they are always found in relation to persons and change as the person in whom they inhere changes, and because they are always found in a specific environment and change as that environment changes; but neither relationship qualifies their essential objectivity. (Chapter VI)

The foregoing study has revealed these characteristics of moral values:--

1. Value always implies a claim upon or postulate of existence (in contrast to certain mathematical judgments, for example, which have no relation to existence).

- 2.Values are found only in relation to persons.
- 3.Value is always found in the particular,the concrete;but it always implies a universal.
- 4.The "absolute" factor in the moral life is not a set of specific precepts but a single principle of moral action--"the will to good." This it is which furnishes unity in the variety of moral situations.
- 5.Through its claim to objectivity,the moral judgment also claims universality.
- 6.Moral judgments always imply a system or order of moral values.
- 7.Moral judgments claim objective validity.

It is necessary to scrutinise that claim more carefully. The objectivity of moral judgments may be vindicated by three lines of argument:--

- a.They claim objectivity. They do not pertain to feelings or attitudes of the subject;but assert something about an object.
- b.They are universal in that:-1)"all who judge correctly must find the same moral value in any given situation",and 2)there is always the appeal to a universal factor which may be vaguely identified as a "common spirit and purpose."
- c.No single good can be confidently determined except with reference to a Chief Good,an organic system of all values,a realm of ends which shall embrace both general principles and concrete



experiences, both the actual order and the moral order, in a harmonious whole. This is the Absolute. (Chapter VII)

Values and  
Reality.

We must now turn to the larger metaphysical question--the status of values in reality as a whole.

Values are related to reality at at least two points:-

1. They exist in the consciousness of men and women and are therefore real factors in existential reality, in the time-process.
2. They point to and assume the reality of moral ideals and laws; and although these laws, unlike the laws of science, pertain not to the actual world as it is but rather as it should be, they are none-the-less constitutive of reality because, a) they affect persons in the time-process (as in (1) ); and b) they do not depend for their validity upon residence in individual minds but are valid irrespective of the time-process and their acknowledgment by persons. They bear a relation to persons almost exactly parallel to that of the relation of the laws of Nature to material reality; except that the latter constitute material reality as it is while moral ideals are the laws of persons as they should and might be. Since they have reality but not existence in the time-process they must belong to the system or order of the

universe,i.e.ultimate reality.

To say the same thing in a somewhat different way:--  
when we affirm that moral values are grounded in the nature of reality,we imply two things. First,moral values have objectivity quite independent of the persons to whom they pertain. And since their reality is quite independent of persons,it must derive from another source--namely from their status in ultimate reality itself. But,second,they are not wholly disconnected from existential reality as we know it.For reality is manifested in persons. And values are vital for persons. Indeed they characterise completed or perfected persons; they express "the limit towards which the nature of persons points and presses. Therefore they are constitutive not only of ultimate reality but of reality as an existing system. In fact, they are a point of connection between the existing world and ultimate reality;it is possible that they furnish a principle of interpretation for the relation between the two.(Chapters VIII and IX)

An analysis of reality reveals:~

1.Existents;including:-

a.Selves;i.e.persons.

b.Similar unities on an inferior level of the organic world.

c.Things.

2.Relations,found only in rebus.

3.Values,found always in personis.

But our whole study emphasises the underlying connectedness of the different types of reality. Things are not found without relations; nor relations except between things. Values pertain only to persons; persons realise themselves only through values. We are driven to a search for a view of the whole. For such an inclusive view, the scientific procedure of analysis plus synthesis is quite inadequate. We must attempt a "synopsis", a vision of the whole or insight into the whole more akin to the method of creative art. It is such a synopsis which we employ in knowledge of self and in sympathetic, significant understanding of other selves. (Chapter X) But, the effort after an interpretation of reality as a whole, of the meaning of the world, must employ material drawn from our experience; its concepts must be taken from our experience of Nature, of ourselves as persons, or of value. What categories are so adequate as those of value? Employment of concepts of value to interpret the world is legitimate IF they fit the facts. The final test of this, as of any alternative interpretation, is in experience. (Chapter XI)

We turn to the examination of alternative interpretations of the world.

The three traditional theistic proofs--the Ontological, the Cosmological and the Teleological Arguments--are no longer persuasive, for reasons advanced by Hume and Kant and on even more compelling

Alternatives to  
a Moral Theism.



evidence of inadequacy. Critical examination suggests that all three may best be viewed as variations of the Cosmological Argument--arguments to an adequate cause of the world. But they neglect the central importance of values; therefore their arguments and the resulting conceptions of God are alike inadequate. On the other hand, a disproportionate emphasis upon Nature, in the Cosmological and Teleological Arguments, estops them from furnishing any adequate explanation of the facts of dysteleology, disease and suffering. Finally, all were infected with hedonistic premisses. But it is clear that the world cannot be interpreted as a process whose purpose is the gift of pleasure or the distribution of even-measured rewards for merit.

(Chapter XII)

On the other hand, neither Pluralism nor Monism is an acceptable alternative to theism. Pluralism of whatever variety fails because it cannot account for either the order of Nature or the order of values. Neither of these can possibly be regarded as due to the activity of finite spiritual units. Even more obvious is the impotence of Pluralism to explain what we have come to regard as the crucial metaphysical problem--the relation of the cosmic order to the order of morality. (Chapter XIV) Monism fails because it cannot recognize the genuine validity of the moral order. Freedom for men and purpose in the cosmos are necessarily excluded from its theory; but freedom and

purpose are indispensable features of a moral universe. (Chapter XVI) We are therefore driven to consider the adequacy of a theism based upon a reformulation of the Moral Argument.

# The Moral Argument.

Kant's statement had the merit that it insisted on the recognition of a realm of ends as well as the realm of Nature in any adequate metaphysical view. Its great weakness was that it set these two orders over against one another as two closed and self-consistent systems. God was required to bring them together. A more valid restatement will start from the recognition that they are not two disparate orders but intimately interrelated, indeed different aspects of a single reality. The key to the meaning of the whole will be sought in the inner logic of the moral order. It will be urged that the world can best be regarded as a medium for the realization of goodness. And that the injustice and ethical neutrality of Nature can be justified from this view since "an imperfect world is necessary for the growth and training of moral beings." In this form, the Moral Argument becomes part of a more comprehensive Cosmological Argument. Then the regularity etc. of the order of Nature leads to the conception of God as the Great Lawgiver; the discovery of abstract principles behind and beneath the cosmic order suggests the additional conception of God as the God of Truth;

and the objectivity and eternal validity of the realm of values completes the conception of God as one whose nature is goodness. (Chapter XIV)

On this view, the world as a whole will be regarded as animated by a universal conscious purpose--the production of finite selves who may freely realise goodness. (Chapter XVI) And the freedom of finite selves to serve or to thwart that purpose will be asserted; not, to be sure, unqualified freedom, but freedom limited only by the conditions of their physical existence and by the character of their own past. (Chapter XVII) From such a theism certain corollaries inevitably follow:--

1. The communication of genuine freedom to finite selves must be regarded as self-limitation by God.
2. Nature is the medium for the production and perfection of goodness in finite minds.
3. Human beings possess real but definitely limited freedom.
4. Divine self-limitation may not preclude complete divine foreknowledge.
5. The moral order expresses the divine nature and purpose.
6. Evil, while not fully explained, is seen to be inevitable in a world where finite selves may choose or reject the good; it is a "temporary failure in the realization of the divine purpose. (Chapter XVIII)



## The Idea of God.

Our argument has issued in the conception of a world whose purpose is the realisation of values; and of the conditions and environment of life as subordinate to that purpose. The reality of both God and man is vigorously asserted. Nature is conceived as an appropriate medium for the realisation of values by free but finite minds. The ground of reality which is held to be characterised by the will to goodness as well as by intelligence and power is God. But any such interpretation involves certain difficulties in the familiar conception of God, and the traditional divine attributes demand reexamination in the light of these considerations.

With regard to infinity, it is appropriate to call God infinite, if by that we mean that there is nothing else of the same nature by which he is limited; or, to put the same point rather differently, that he is not limited by anything other than his own nature. Self-limitation in the existence of genuinely free human beings we have found most certainly true of God. With more confidence we may say that God is omnipresent in the sense that there is no part of space beyond his power; and everlasting because that power is conceived as continuing through all time. Human freedom is no denial of essential omnipotence, since to deny the possibility of assuming self-limitation in this way would be to restrict the absolute power of God and so to render him finite. With regard to the absoluteness

of God, the problem is more difficult. In its literal meaning, "absolute" implies the absence of relations; but our conception of God involves the thought of relations with finite selves who possess a measure of independence of the divine will. However this independence is limited and given. Therefore we may speak of God as absolute, meaning thereby that there is nothing outside of him in the sense of independent of his nature or will.

But the traditional attributes give us only the form of the idea of God; for its positive content we must turn elsewhere. This must be reached through an interpretation of reality as we know it. And we have already determined that the more significant aspects of the divine nature are to be discovered through the conception of value. Therefore we shall think of God as perfect, i.e. as one in whom there is to be found value or worth in its fulness. But here we will confront the allegation of anthropomorphism. The reply is that we are employing legitimate, indeed inevitable, anthropomorphism. Illegitimate anthropomorphism starts with certain human qualities and then argues that the same qualities must be found in the Godhead only in infinite degree; it makes the idea of God in the image of man. But our procedure has been to discover certain qualities as necessarily implied in the ground of the world-order as we know it, and therefore necessarily present in the nature of God. It is anthropomorphic only in that it

draws on the experiences of human life and the concepts of human thought for its conceptions; as such it is legitimate. However these terms taken over from human experience must be used guardedly. For example, wisdom may properly be predicated of God since all knowledge must be his, but immediately and intuitively and without the tedious and faltering labour by which human minds arrive at truth. And most surely God is love, though again with some modification of the meaning of the term as we employ it with reference to human character. "The love of God is the will to good of men which has as its end the communion of man with God."<sup>66</sup>

But our final thought of God must be in terms of the embodiment which that love has in the actual world-process, in terms of divine purpose. And that purpose has in view both the perfecting of individual human personalities as they too make the supreme values their concern and their delight; and the gradual realisation within the time-process of a perfect Realm of values, a Kingdom of God, as human spirits take the divine purpose as their own and become fellow-creators with him. But such cooperation by man with God is always wholly voluntary; it is best conceived as the human response to One who stands at the door of human life and knocks.<sup>67</sup> The final emphasis falls upon the necessity for human enlistment in the divine purposes.

(Chapter XIX).

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 66. Sorley, Moral Values, p. 491.  
 67. Op. cit., p. 494.



Two further objections to our position deserve supplementary rejoinder:-

a. It may be contended that too much stress is laid upon the imperfection of the world and the facts of moral failure. But, an imperfect world is the only one appropriate for the purpose we have discerned as supreme--the training of character; and failure is an inevitable stepping-stone to moral achievement.

b. It may be held that the argument has rested too heavily upon morality, since morality is limited, and in two ways:-

1. By its dependence upon other values. This may be granted but the complementary truth is that they likewise are dependent upon morality. And it is certain that in the theistic quest, character is indispensable; "only the pure in heart can see God"<sup>68</sup>.

2. By its dependence upon conditions of the time-process; it provides no conception of the perfect life when mortality shall have been transcended. Here, we can hardly dare to guess the answer; we cannot fully foresee the conditions of the 'beatific vision'. But we must believe that, in addition to the joys of perfect knowledge and the enjoyment of all beauty, there would be occupation for the employment of moral energy. "There would still be call and room for pressing further into the unknown and making all things subservient to the values which it is the function of free spirits to realise"<sup>69</sup> (Chapter XX).

68. Op.cit., p.511.

69. Op.cit., p.516.

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CHAPTER FIVE"THE FAITH OF A MORALIST."A.E.Taylor.

Professor A.E.Taylor has been described by one who is himself among the foremost of contemporary theologians as "the most learned living Briton." Few, I suppose, would challenge his right to be cited as "the greatest of living Platonists"<sup>1</sup>. And Professor Muirhead in reviewing his Gifford Lectures speaks of him as "one of the acutest, as he is certainly the most learned, supporter of Theism in Great Britain....More than any other writer since Coleridge he unites a profound knowledge of Platonic thought, both in the ancient and mediaeval world, with depth of feeling for what is best in Christian theism."<sup>2</sup> One whose intimate mastery of the relevant literature both within and without the fields of his own special study is well-nigh encyclopedic, who has written authoritatively on Aristotle and Hume and the English moralists and Whitehead as well as upon Plato (though his greatest love, it is said, is for Aquinas), who marshalls to the service of his own philosophy pretty much the whole gamut of Greek and Christian religious thought, and who is at present the ablest exponent of liberal Anglo-Catholic theology cannot fail to have much of importance to contribute to the theme of this particular study. We turn to his thought about God with the keenest anticipation.

1. E. G. Selwyn, in Theology, March 1931, p. 121.

2. J. H. Muirhead, in Hibbert Journal, April 1931, p. 553.



## II.

His Philosophi-  
cal Pilgrimage.

An exposition of Professor Taylor's theism is made more difficult by the extraordinary development his conviction has traced in more than forty years of philosophical study. Inquiry concerning almost any aspect of his thought must be countered by the question, "At what period do you mean?" It is probable that no philosopher of equal eminence has changed his fundamental presuppositions more radically between his earliest writings and his mature position. If it would be an exaggeration to say that Professor Taylor's mind has "boxed the philosophical compass", at least it is not an overstatement that on not a few of the basic issues his present conviction seems to stand at the exact opposite of that of an earlier period. Happily he is completely self-conscious about the path his reflection has followed, and has given us a brief outline of the principal stages in this pilgrimage--stages which a careful study<sup>3</sup> of his writings will clearly suggest.

Apparently Professor Taylor's thought has advanced through about four main periods, more or less coincident with four steps in his academic career, although I judge there have been no abrupt transitions. To the first, the years of his life at Oxford first as an undergraduate and then as a fellow, he came as he tells us troubled by the apparent conflicts between his early theological heritage and the supposed results of evolutionary science and biblical criticism. "What I looked for in philosophy was some sane  
3. In Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, pp. 270ff.

defence of convictions which I felt were essential for the conduct of life against what seemed to be the disintegrating influences of scholarship and biological science." <sup>4</sup> It was a time of intensive study; his thought was largely dominated by that of T.H.Green and Bradley, and he seems to have rendered an almost unquestioning allegiance to the idealistic tradition which they represented. Although the first two of his larger works date from the period immediately following, <sup>1</sup> I judge we are to identify not a few of the strongest strains in them with the Oxford influences. The next stage (1896-1903) found Professor Taylor at Manchester, in intimate contact with the realistic criticism of Professor S.Alexander; but the loyal adherence to Bradley in particular continued. It is the period of two large, and able, <sup>5</sup> pieces of writing--The Problem of Conduct and Elements of Metaphysics. <sup>6</sup> Both follow closely after and lean heavily upon the Oxford Idealists, both exalt the importance of metaphysics and disparage the role of theology, both seek to vindicate the validity of religious experience but hold aloof from the historic religions and religious institutions, both advance a theory of knowledge, familiar enough in idealist thought, which would seem to render the worship of a genuinely objective Deity very dubious. Clearly it is the writing of an exceedingly able critical mind which believes itself to have won personal satisfaction in a highly abstruse philosophy; in his own words, "I suppose that at this time of my life I was not far from developing

4. Op.cit., p.270.

5. London, 1901.

6. London, 1903.



into a kind of 'Positivist'..." It was toward the close of this period at Manchester that Professor Taylor himself began to be aware of marked changes in his point of view, partly influenced by the thought of Professor James Ward, partly by a more incisive critique of empiricism and positivism on his own part, partly by a fresh return to Plato, as he says "in the light of Leibniz". We may infer that the five years spent at McGill University, Montreal (1903--1908), gave opportunity for the germination and maturing of these new lines of speculation. In any event, his return to Great Britain in 1908 not merely marked the beginning of his greatest scholarly and literary productivity. With it began the final stage of philosophical reflection in the course of which there has steadily developed toward completeness and finality what we may regard as Professor Taylor's ultimate position.<sup>8</sup> To this period<sup>9</sup> belong his three most important writings on Plato and a veritable host of contributions to learned journals in<sup>10</sup> addition to several especially interesting monographs. It is also from the latter decade of this period that have come his most important utterances upon God, the material to which our attention will be principally given--the justly famed article on "Theism" in Hasting's Encyclopedia<sup>11</sup> of Religion and Ethics, the contribution to the symposium

7. Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 271.

8. Op. cit., p. 272.

9. Plato, London, 1908 (Constable).

Plato, The Man and His Work, London, 1926. (Methuen).

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10. See, espec., St. Thomas Aquinas as a Philosopher, Oxford, 1924.  
David Hume and the Miraculous, Cambridge, 1927.

The Problem of Evil, London, 1929.

11. Issued in 1921.



Essays Catholic and Crätical under the title "The  
<sup>12</sup>  
 Vindication of Religion" ,and finally the Gifford  
<sup>13</sup>  
 Lectures at the University of St.Andrews of 1926--28 .  
 Of the influences which have been important in leading  
 Professor Taylor to his later conclusions one only  
 deserves unique emphasis--the mind of Baron Friedrich  
<sup>14</sup>  
 Von Hugel.

So marked has been the alteration in Professor  
 Taylor's convictions between his starting-point in  
 philosophy and his present outlook that it is perhaps  
 worth while to note the contrast in one or two especially  
 important particulars. At no point is the contrast more  
 vivid than in the relative significance attached to  
 metaphysics on the one hand and theology and religion on  
 the other hand. In The Problem of Conduct metaphysics is  
 defined as "the analysis of the formal characteristics  
 of experience, apart from all consideration of its concrete  
<sup>15</sup>  
 contents" ,and again it is stated that "the whole problem  
 of metaphysics is to construct a description of the world  
 of experience which shall answer to our ideal of 'pure'  
 experience--that is, shall contain no single element which  
 cannot be completely described in terms of experienced fact."  
<sup>16</sup>  
 To be sure, the term 'experience' is given the widest  
 possible scope; the apprehension of God in religious exper-  
 ience is accepted as part of the proper data of metaphy-  
 sics but the latter "can never reveal to us any existence  
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12. 1926.

13. The Faith of a Moralist, 2 vols., London, 1930.

14. Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 272.

15. The Problem of Conduct, p. 441.

16. Op.cit., p. 449.

entirely beyond or entirely independent of an experience<sup>17</sup> in which it forms an inseparable aspect." This conception is taken over and given elaboration in Professor Taylor's introduction to metaphysics itself, published two years later.<sup>18</sup> Here the distinction between metaphysics and religion is drawn in the most absolute and (as I should hold) invidious manner. Apparently metaphysics is useful only as an exercise in intellectual speculation but without practical fruitfulness for the moral life; indeed, since it must expose the illusions and false logic of the popular mind, its influence on practical life would appear to be definitely dangerous. By the same token, religion, inevitably and invariably tainted with illusion (what we in contemporary parlance would stigmatise as "wishful thinking"), can have no significance whatever as a dependable guide to truth; but it is of indispensable importance as a source of inspiration for practical endeavor.<sup>19</sup> To be sure, from the moralist's point of view, the more significant function in this dichotomy is assigned to religion. But one always feels behind the discussion the scholar's perhaps unintended condescension toward the merely practical discipline and his corresponding supreme valuation of the pure quest for truth. With this lofty estimate of speculation may be contrasted the following sentences--a passage from Professor Taylor's confessio fidei which is of the first importance for an understanding

17. Op. cit., p. 448.

18. Elements of Metaphysics, London, 1903.

19. See especially the two closing chapters.



of his present point of view:-

"The business of metaphysical philosophy is, in a way, a modest one. It has to be content to recognize that in the sciences, in history, in morality and religion it is dealing with a reality which is in the end simply 'given' and not to be explained away. Its concern is with the various intellectual interpretations of the 'given', and its supreme task is not, as I once used to suppose, the 'unification of the sciences', but the necessarily imperfect and tentative reconciliation of the exigences of scientific thinking with the imperative moral and religious demands of life. It has not to invent an approved substitute for historically real religion and morality, but to fathom as much as it can of their significance. There is no special infallibility about metaphysics and its methods are necessarily 'dialectical' in the Aristotelian sense. It seems to follow that there can be no final 'metaphysics', and that the temptation of all others which a student of the subject should avoid as he grows older is the temptation to have a 'system' which leaves no unexplained mystery at the root of things. And it becomes a question whether, after all, the main service of metaphysical study to the mind is not to 'liberate it from prejudices' and thus to prepare it to receive illumination from sources outside metaphysics." 20

To this may be added the brief disparagement of 'systems' in much the same vein in the opening Gifford Lecture:-

"For my own part, the more I reflect on the deliverances of philosophers with a system, even those for whom I feel the highest reverence, the more readily do the words rise to my lips, mirabilis facta est scientia tua ex me; confortata est, et non potero ad eam. (Psalm cxxxviii. (Vulg.) 6.) 21

The obverse aspect of the above contrast is seen in the writer's changed estimate of the value of theology for our final view of things. It is no wonder that in his earlier thought religious belief can be of no use in seeking an understanding of reality since its origin is so largely in immediate feeling and the vagaries of individual

20. Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 272.

21. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, p. 9.



temperament:-

"Theological beliefs are in the last resort based upon immediate feeling, and not immediate feeling upon beliefs. In this sense, at any rate, it is true that all genuine religious life implies the practical influencing of feeling and action by convictions which go beyond proved and known truth....

"What the convictions to which we thus surrender the practical guidance of life are, in any individual case, seems to be largely a question of individual constitution and social tradition." 22

From such premisses the following judgment on the metaphysical significance of theology would be expected:-

"I have called philosophy a science, but theology a would-be science. The defect which, in my judgment, deprives theology of all claim to the title of a science lies in the arbitrary restriction which its point of departure imposes upon its treatment of the phenomena. Theologians, in fact, sin habitually against Plato's demand that the true lover of science shall be interested in the whole of his subject. Their conception of the religious problem compels them to isolate a part of the religious life of mankind (e.g. the religious experiences described in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures), and to treat that part as equivalent to the whole. Such a refusal to face all the facts fully and fairly must in any case vitiate the conclusions arrived at by theology as to the essential nature and requisites of religion.... Hence we are bound to maintain.... that theology.... possesses only the external form without any of the concrete filling of science, or is, in other words, a pseudo-science." 23

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22. Elements of Metaphysics, p. 390.

23. The Problem of Conduct, p. 438.

Students of Professor Taylor's earlier writings must often be sorely puzzled as to his true estimate of the worth and validity of religious experience itself. In The Problem of Conduct that estimate is, on the whole, high. The following passage is representative:- "In one form or another the religious attitude towards the world-system seems as inseparable from a fully developed intelligent human experience as the ethical or the scientific, and this is, of itself, sufficient evidence that, whatever may be the accretions with which it is overlaid and disfigured in its various transitory guises the religious experience in its permanent essence is an inseparable element in a comprehensive human experience of the world. And this is all that can be said of the scientific or any other aspect of the world of experience." (p. 443). But in the Elements of Metaphysics, published only two years later, is to be found the



And the final conclusion regarding the use of either ethical or religious ideas in the formation of a world-view is as follows:-

"Ethics, resting, as we have seen that it does in all its stages, upon concepts which are tainted with illusion and cannot be purged from that illusion without suicidal results, cannot be founded, except in ignorance of the nature of the subject-matter, upon a doctrine of metaphysical first principles, and can still less be regarded as itself affording the sole and sufficient basis for a metaphysical theory of the ultimate character of existence.... And again, a metaphysic founded upon ethics would be a metaphysic of baseless and ultimately unmeaning assumptions--in a word, a science of 'make-believe.'" 24

"With our verdict upon the ultimate coherency of the 'religious' view of the world with itself that problem has, by implication, received its solution. The final break-down of religious ideas when treated as a fund of true information about the nature of the real world is itself the best proof that the study of the practical life in all its stages is, and always must be, independent of all preconceived metaphysical notions, and that no 'postulates' can be forced by ethics or natural theology upon a reluctant metaphysic. For morality and religion the one thing needful, for metaphysics the one thing 'suspect', is a vein of ardent natural emotion unchecked and unsophisticated by philosophical reflection upon the ultimate constitution of things." 25

By way of contrast it is perhaps sufficient to point out that in seeking to "vindicate" religion Professor Taylor proposes three parallel and mutually complementary pathways to God--that from the order of Nature, that from man's moral experience, and that from distinctively religious experience. And the suggestion that God might be reached through

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 following:- "The 'religious' temperament is apparently shown by experience to be, in its intenser manifestations quite as much an idiosyncrasy of congenital endowment as the 'aesthetic'. There are persons, not otherwise mentally defective, who seem to be almost devoid of it... As many of these persons are ethically excellent, some of them exceptionally so,.... there seems to be no direct connection between religious sensibility and moral excellence." (p.390n)  
 24. The Problem of Conduct, p.493.  
 25. Op.cit., p.500-501.

another and distinctively metaphysical avenue of approach is decisively rejected. "From this point of view there is no real distinction between a peculiar metaphysical way to God and the ways we have just enumerated. In studying them (i.e. the evidence from Nature, from the moral life, and from religious experience) we are from start to finish within the region of metaphysics and there is no fourth special<sup>26</sup> 'way of metaphysics' to follow." We may add the reminder that the central purpose of Professor Taylor's latest and most ambitious philosophical work is to "discuss the question<sup>27</sup> of the relations between morality and religion", and from that study to seek to determine what, if any, definitely<sup>28</sup> metaphysical realities are postulated by the moral life. And those volumes reach their ultimate objective when they confront their readers with the famous claim that "theology, the knowledge of God, is the rightful mistress; 'philosophy' and 'science', the whole body of our systematised knowledge<sup>29</sup> of the creatures, only the handmaid" -- a claim which the writer at least welcomes and fully and confidently acknowledges. Surely here is a "Copernican revolution" in personal conviction!

We should expect that, behind these vividly contrasted attitudes toward the relative significance of metaphysics, morality, religion and theology, there might be found an even more fundamental transition in the writer's view of the ways by which knowledge comes and the scope of the knowledge

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 26. Essays Catholic and Critical, p. 45.

27. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I., p. 12.

28. Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 1.

29. Op. cit., Vol. I., p. 14.



which is possible for us--his epistemology. This expectation is fully vindicated. In his early thought, knowledge is given us by reason which "is always reflective, critical of and systematising the material which is supplied to it by the various forms of immediate apprehension, such as perception, aesthetic enjoyment, and moral or religious intuition"<sup>30</sup>; but faith, in contrast to reason, is "a form of direct and immediate apprehension, and should in this respect be compared rather with perception than with any conceptual form of consciousness"<sup>31</sup>. It is therefore not a form of knowledge. To be sure, faith is, in one view, the higher avenue toward the apprehension of reality for it is itself a form of direct experience while "the form of reason or knowing is ultimately inadequate to the full representation of experience."<sup>32</sup> In Professor Taylor's latest reflection on the ever-puzzling problems of epistemology, the higher authority is again given to the experience of immediate apprehension of which religious faith is an instance; but faith has now become vision, and such immediate and inclusive vision is the alone type of true knowledge.

"It is this kind of direct and immediate apprehension of truth which we should regard as the type of true knowing. All that we commonly call our scientific knowledge is an endeavour, never fully successful, to recapture for our mental vision of facts this immediacy and obviousness from which we begin by passing away the moment judgement supervenes on sense-perception. Judgement has sometimes been spoken of as the characteristic form of the apprehension of truth. It seems to me that the very fact that most of what we know about the world has to be couched in the form of judgement is the characteristic mark of the inevitable imperfection of our apprehension." 33

30. The Problem of Conduct, p. 454. 31. Op. cit.

32. Op. cit., p. 458.

33. "Knowing and Believing", in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1928-29, p. 20.

"If we could completely achieve the ideal of knowledge...., the perfect adaequatio intellectus cum re, as we cannot, our knowledge would no longer be thinking, or wear the form of judging; it would have recovered the directness characteristic of the perception from which it began by setting out. It is this conception of complete knowledge as a direct vision, to which the form of judgement is inadequate, which, as it seems to me, is already implied in the admission of a real distinction between knowledge and true belief.... I mean that the type of perfect knowledge is an apprehension which is at once direct and, as I may say, 'self-luminous' or 'transparent.' The absence of either directness or transparency--what I might call the colour of 'of-courseness'--is an indication that our apprehension is not all that complete knowledge should be." 34

"I suppose it is impossible for any man to immerse himself long and thoroughly in the study of the life and work of a great personality or a great age without feeling that he in the end comes by a direct insight into purpose and meaning which he can call by no name but knowledge, though it is quite impossible to demonstrate the correctness of his insight to any one or even to communicate it." 35

The implications of two such views of the nature of knowledge for our knowledge of God furnishes an even more vivid contrast. In The Problem of Conduct, the question, "Does God exist, as God, entirely outside the religious experience of mankind?", is met with a "decided negative." 36 And a few pages following there is added this startling statement, "We may even say then, that, in a sense, the religious experience must be regarded as adding an important element to the life not only of man, but also of the Absolute itself. If man is not fully man until he has learned to worship, God too is not fully God until man has learned to worship Him." 37 Our initial surprise is somewhat mitigated when we discover that this apparently "subjectivist" interpretation of the divine existence is merely an implicate of 34. Op.cit., p.21. 35. Op.cit., p.24. 36. The Problem of Conduct, p.448. 37. Op.cit., p.451.



the thorough-going idealist theory of knowledge to which the writer still gives full adherence.

"We maintain, then, that taking existence in the full and proper sense of the terms, nothing ever is, outside the concrete experience in which it is an ingredient, what it is within that experience. The utmost reality that can be conceded to any object of experience outside the experience in which it is known, is the reality of certain conditions which, with the addition of the further condition of certain psychological dispositions in the percipient, will yield the experience of the object in question." 38

While Professor Taylor's later thought might find it possible to acquiesce in much of the foregoing, with a change of definition here and there, nothing could be farther removed, in point of view and central tenor, from his present outlook on our manner of knowing. In his latest writing there stands forth the rugged realism, as to both knowledge of the objective world and specifically moral and religious knowledge, which we should expect in one who has drunk deep of the painstaking, guarded but invincible critical realism of the late Baron Von Hugel.

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"The green colour of the grass, the crimson of the rose, are there in the world as it is given to us through the eye, no less than the shape of the blade or the petal. It is not my mind which, in knowing the grass or the rose, puts into it a green or a red which was not there; on the contrary, it is from an indefinitely rich and complex given that I come to single out these particular elements for separate contemplation." 40

"What is given is.....a single most imperfectly discriminated whole, in which shape, colour, size, odour, sound, are all present from the outset, and progress in knowledge means, not making unauthorised additions to this whole, but becoming increasingly sensitive to distinctions within it." 41

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38. The Problem of Conduct, pp. 449-50.

39. Friedrich Von Hugel, The Reality of God, espec. Ch. I. Also unpublished manuscript, Douglas Steere, Critical Realism in the Thought of Baron Von Hugel.

40. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I., p. 57. 41. Op. cit., p. 59.



" Now all this seems to be no less true of our moral 'ideals'....I do not, by an 'act of valuation', make Jonathan's affection for David or the self-devotion of Mettus Curtius, the humility of St. Francis, or the patient labour of Darwin good; I find the goodness there in them. Presumably I should have no moral 'ideals' at all, if I had not begun in childhood by accepting 'as a little child' the moral tradition of my community with its witness to the fact that qualities like these are 'objectively' good, exactly as iron is hard and lead soft." 42

" It is not by 'searching' that we find out God. ....It is the experience of rich, but confused, contact with the supernatural which plays, in our knowledge of God, the same part that immediate contact through sense with a confused 'other' does in our knowledge of Nature." 43

It is hardly necessary to add that the God of whom we thus gain knowledge is not a being who cannot be regarded as existing apart from human experience of him, one who is "not fully God until man has learned to worship Him." Rather, he is "a transcendent living and personal Good--one, complete, eternal" <sup>44</sup>, at once the Creator and the <sup>45</sup> Redeemer and Sanctifier of mankind.

We have dwelt so long upon the advance in Professor Taylor's philosophical outlook not primarily to exhibit the startling transmutations which the convictions of a truly able scholar may undergo as life deepens and insight ripens, but rather for two other reasons. First, that we might thus come by an appreciation of the mental temper of the man, so important for a just estimate of his ideas. And, secondly, that such a historical survey might supply something of the background we require for our main

enquiry. It has revealed not merely the far distant points

42. The Faith of a Moralists, Vol. I., p. 60.

43. Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 231.

44. Op.cit., Vol. II, p. 1.

45. Op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 233, 234.

from which his thought has journeyed to its present conclusions, but also such of those conclusions as are necessary prolegomena to theism proper--theory of knowledge, the scope and importance of metaphysics, the place of religious experience in our search for truth. We are now prepared to approach his idea of God directly.

### III.

#### Taylor's Idea of God.

In the period of his earliest writings, Professor Taylor had maintained that there is only one possible "proof of the being of God", but that it is quite convincing and adequate. It is the well-nigh universal existence of religious experience as an important element within the concrete whole of human life; this gives us a form of the "ontological proof."<sup>46</sup> Of the prevalence of religious experience as "an inseparable element in a comprehensive human experience"<sup>47</sup> we have already made note. It is quite unthinkable that nature should have produced a race doomed to believe something about the world which mature reflection indicates to be false; therefore we must believe the fundamental assumptions of the religious attitude to have correspondence with reality. "In this sense the 'ontological proof' seems valid and irrefragable."<sup>48</sup> To be sure, the Deity thus established is hardly to be identified with the God of religion.

"The ontological proof, rightly understood, establishes not so much the existence of 'God' as the existence of the 'divine', as an aspect of the world system. Whether the 'divine' and 'perfect'

<sup>46</sup> The Problem of Conduct, p. 443. Cp. Kant's early view, pp. 41ff.  
<sup>47</sup> See above, p. 155; and The Problem of Conduct, p. 443.  
<sup>48</sup> Op. cit., p. 444.



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47. See above, p. 155; and The Problem of Conduct, p. 443.  
48. Op. cit., p. 444.

is to be regarded as 'personal' or not, whether it is immanent in the perpetual universe, or, as Aristotle taught, 'separate', whether moral predicates can properly be ascribed to it.....all these are questions which cannot be settled by any short and easy 'ontological' method." 49.

"The term 'God' means for us simply the perfect system which is the finally adequate object of religious worship, and nothing more. Whether that system is personal or not, and, if personal, whether it exists in the form of a single consciousness or a society of consciousnesses, in what sense it is identical with or different from 'nature'--all these controversial questions must be left for the present undiscussed. What we have assumed as real in our statements about the religious experience is not the personality or impersonality, the 'transcendence' or 'immanence', of the perfect Absolute, but simply its existence as a perfect systematic whole...." 50

In a discussion dating from the same period, the familiar traditional "theistic" proofs are reviewed, the devastating Kantian criticisms considered and these criticisms judged to be, on the whole, sound and unanswerable. It is recognized that they could be reformulated; but any restatements would be exposed to closely parallel attacks and there is no indication that the substitute formulations would be found

51

convincing. I have not been able to discover in this phase of Professor Taylor's thought any detailed consideration of the evidence for God from the moral order of man's moral experience. Reliance is placed exclusively upon the facts of religious experience; but ~~this~~ argument is handled rationalistically and idealistically rather than critically.

In his earliest apologetic, Professor Taylor<sup>thus</sup> relied entirely upon what he regarded as a form of the ontological argument, and the classic expression of the moral argument is passed over if not entirely neglected. In his latest

49. The Problem of Conduct, p. 444.

50. Op.cit., p. 441.

51. Elements of Metaphysics, closing chapters.



discussion of theism ,on the other hand,attention is fixed almost exclusively upon the implications of moral experience, and the possible value of the older proofs as supporting evidence is not considered. But in two important though briefer monographs dating from the same general period as the Gifford Lectures,he has traced a broader and more comprehensive approach to the idea of God. We think we are not mistaken in finding in this richer theism the author's full mature conviction.

The main outlines of this synoptic position had been clearly anticipated by implication in the course of his critique of other writers in the article on "Theism" in Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics <sup>53</sup> . The purpose of that article was primarily expository; it aimed to display the more important theistic arguments from Plato to contemporary Logical Pluralism. But throughout,the writers' personal views are permitted to appear here and there,and especially in the discussion of Kant's attempted annihilation of the traditional proofs. Here it is made clear that Professor Taylor finds Kant's objections partially sound but invalid against the essential burden of each of the three"proofs". In particular,it is hinted that the cosmological argument might be so restated as to elude the attack Kant had brought against it. The conclusion of the matter is that "speculation and practice alike point to the eternal nature of God as the object in which both find their completion. We have a double exigence of the practical and the

52. The Faith of a Moralist,2 vols.,1930.(Gifford Lectures delivered in 1926-28.)

53. Vol.12,pp.261ff.(Issued in 1921).

speculative reason on the side of theism...One might add<sup>54</sup> that there is a third exigence, the specifically religious."

These and other considerations are presented in amplified discussion in what is, to the present writer, incomparably the most notable and satisfying summary treatment of theistic issues which Professor Taylor has given us-- the essay "The Vindication of Religion" in Essays Catholic<sup>55</sup> and Critical. The Gifford Lectures add nothing of first importance which is not here sketched in outline. Accordingly we shall first review the argument of this essay, then pass on to a fuller discussion of the moral argument specifically with such added light as The Faith of a Moralist may offer, and conclude with some more general comment.

#### IV.

"The Vindication of Religion." The argument of "The Vindication of Religion" may be summarised as follows:-

The task of the Christian apologist in seeking to 'vindicate' the central truths of religion is not unlike that of the scientist in attempting to interpret the world of Nature. Neither hopes to achieve anything like complete demonstration. "In either case the most that can be demanded of us is to show that there ~~are~~ real and undeniable facts which call for explanation and must not be explained away; that the interpretation supplied brings coherence and 'sense' into them, where they would, without it, be an unintelligible puzzle;

<sup>54</sup> "Theism", in H.E.R.E., Vol.12, p.285.

<sup>55</sup> pp.29ff. This symposium was first published in 1926.



that the more steadily and systematically the principles we fall back on are employed, the less puzzling does the reality we are trying to interpret become." <sup>56</sup> In both enquiries the attitude of trust and faith where demonstration is impossible is demanded. Each aims to discover the presuppositions of the facts of life. Each is dealing with "something which it finds obscurely and confusedly 'given' as part of our human experience." <sup>57</sup> In both enterprises, it is the word of the man who has steeped himself deeply in the material of his study which is alone authoritative; "the only consensus which is of weight in matters of religion is the consensus of deeply religious men." <sup>58</sup>

The Evidence  
for Theism.

The interpreter of religion will find at his disposal three independent sets of facts - three parallel and complementary paths of approach to his goal. These may be called "a witness of Nature to God", a witness of Ethics to God", and "a <sup>a</sup>witness of Religion itself to God." <sup>59</sup>

"From Nature  
to God".

a. The argument from Nature to God may be made in many different forms. But all embody a single fundamental conviction--"that the incomplete points to the complete, the dependent to the independent, the temporal to the eternal." <sup>60</sup> Further Nature is in some sense 'alive'; motion characterizes her behaviour, and that

56. Essays Catholic and Critical, p.39. 57. Op.cit.p.41.  
58. Op.cit.,p.40. 59. Op.cit.,p.44.  
60. Op.cit.,p.46.

incessant change must have its ground in a reality which is unchanging. Nature's 'aliveness' is made possible by the interplay of two disparate and apparently ultimate factors--"law" which is unchanging, and "brute fact" which is forever in process of transmutation. Their inter-relation seems to point to a supernatural and transcendent Being behind them both. Added weight is given to these considerations when we recall that Nature seems to show a 'trend' toward the development of intelligences surpassing her own---in the process we call evolution.

"This is the way in which Nature, as it seems to me, inevitably points beyond itself as the temporal and mutable to an 'other' which is eternal and immutable." 61

"The spectacle of movement and change which we call 'Nature' thus at least suggests the presence of some 'transcendent' source of movement and change which is strictly eternal, above all mutability and having no succession of phases within itself, and is omnipotent, since it is itself the source of all 'becoming'. The orderliness and apparent purposive 'trend towards intelligence' in Nature similarly at least suggest that this omnipotent and eternal 'supernatural' is a wholly intelligent Will." 62

"From Man  
to God."

b. In Nature we discern 'footprints' of a Creator; in man's moral being we may find the 'image' of God. For in man "Nature and supernature meet; he has both within his own heart, and is a denizen at once of the temporal and the eternal." <sup>63</sup> Indeed it is precisely this characteristic which marks him off from animal life--

61. Op.cit.,p.55.

62. Op.cit.,p.58.

63. Op.cit.,p.59.



his inner necessity to adapt himself to an environment trans-earthly and eternal; and a full fidelity to that necessity may require him to sacrifice freely those temporal and human goods which all men prize supremely.

The evidence from man's moral nature, also, may be developed in several different ways. (1) We may fasten upon the fact of Conscience. A careful examination of the consciousness of 'oughtness' will reveal clearly that the ultimate grounds of that obligation cannot be located in any human considerations, even the good of society. It is independent of all temporal consequences; it points to a supernatural sanction. (This is the essence of the Kantian doctrine.) (2) Or we may note that moral aspiration forever points beyond any goal achievable or even imaginable within human experience; it seems directed toward an immortal and eternal good. "Since the goal of the moral life cannot by any possibility be attained under temporal conditions, and yet its reality (which, in the case of an ideal which ought to inspire and regulate all our conduct, must mean its real attainability by us) is the necessary condition that the inspiration to progress shall not fail, our final destiny must lie in the non-temporal." (3) Or we may remark that man alone of all the creatures as far as we know exhibits a sense of sin. And the poignancy and indelibility of the sin-consciousness, as well as

its irreducibility to the category of "mistake", "error" etc., is in direct ratio to the cultural sensitivity and ethical maturity of the sinner. At its noblest, it always seems to suggest an offense against not a "law" or a "value" or "society", but a person; an attitude towards "an unseen being of transcendent purity and holiness of character."<sup>65</sup> (4) Finally we may concentrate upon the restlessness, the unsatisfied idealism, the inherent nostalgia for the 'Beyond', which characterises all elevated living. The inevitability of separation and the loss of all earthly goods through death is only an inescapable confirmation of this sense deep within human consciousness --the recognition that our true and final home is not in this world. "Nothing seems plainer than this, that if true peace and content are to be found by man at all, they cannot be found in anything temporal or secular. They must spring from a conscious intimate possession of personal union of heart and will with a being who knows us through and through as no man knows another, or even himself, who contains within Him an inexhaustible wealth of being which excludes all risk of satiety, who is utterly eternal and abiding and therefore<sup>66</sup> can never change or fail." And the final conclusion from this manysided evidence from man's moral nature may be stated thus:-

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65. Op.cit.,p.67.

66. Op.cit.,p.69.

A very much fuller presentation of these four 'evidences' from man's moral nature with quotations from The Faith of a Moralist will be found below, pp.188-194.



"We see that the general character of the argument from Nature and from our moral being to God is the same in both cases. In both we reason from the temporal to the eternal. But there is this difference, that the elusive being to which we reason is, in the second case, something richer. Reflexion on what is below and around us suggested only an eternal intelligent designer and source of Nature. Reflexion on the moral nature of man suggests a being who is more, the eternal something before whom we must not only bow in amazement, like Job, but kneel in reverence as the source and support of all moral goodness. This is as it should be, since in the one case we are attempting to see the cause of the effect, in the other to see the features of the father in the child." 67

68

"From God  
to God."

c. But what of the evidence of specifically

'religious experience'? Two remarks demand attention.

(1). So called 'religious experiences' are not to be thought of as an isolated group of quite unique and rather bizarre happenings; rather they refer to "the special way in which the whole of life is experienced by the 'religious' man." 69 To be sure certain of life's happenings awaken the religious response more fully than others. Here the analogy of the artist aids us. The true artist's eye sees beauty everywhere; but this is because it has first been arrested by the presence of beauty where its manifestation was most vivid and unmistakable. So also with the religious man's outlook on life. (The analogy has a further application; it is because of the alert sensitiveness of the artist to the beauty all about us that the common eye is inspired also

67. Op.cit.,p.70

68. The two paragraphs which follow have drawn also on the H.E.R.E. article on "Theism".

69.Op.cit.,p.71.

to find beauty there.) The clear mark of the distinctively religious experience is that it is the consciousness of a reality which is 'other' and 'ineffable'--a reality which stirs in us the response at once of 'awe' and 'worship'. We should not be discouraged from attaching validity and significance to distinctively religious experiences because they are often crude in their early appearance in the individual or the race, or because they may sometimes be confused with sexual or aesthetic or merely sensory experiences, or because they are especially marked in conjunction with adolescence, or because of the presence of analogous experiences and the use of the same terminology in purely secular aspects of life; the same considerations might equally be urged to invalidate any other of the most significant of life's experiences, for example the aesthetic. The important point is-- it is precisely these attitudes, of 'awe' and 'worship' in the presence of the 'other-worldly' and the 'ineffable', which have unfailingly characterised the noblest and most sensitive of the sons of men. This leads to our second important comment upon the evidential value of 'religious experience'. (2) Exactly as it is the musician who can tell us most about music, the lover of beauty who can most faithfully report the presence of beauty about us, the trained and devoted laboratory worker whose word carries authority in scientific matters, so it is the



"devotees of the Good", those who have surrendered their highest gifts and their full loyalties to that which is of all things the most worthy of service, who may speak as 'experts' in the province of the spirit. "The verdict on the religious life if it is to count must come from the men who have first made it their own by living it. Only they can tell 'how much there is in it'." <sup>70</sup>

"The lives of the 'saints' are the real answer of theism to the last insistent perplexities of the doubter who lurks in each of us. Others, without the theist's faith, have often led noble lives; they have fought a good fight with the untowardness of a world which they have believed in their hearts to be stupid or malignant; yet the most clear-sighted among them, like Huxley, have confessed that mortal heroism is a losing game, a battle with the cosmic forces. What they lack--and one does not see how the lack is to be made good--is the secret of spiritual joy which belongs to those who are assured that it is the Good which is supreme in heaven and in earth." 71

#### Summary.

But our concluding emphasis would not be upon the distinctiveness of the definitely 'religious experience' but rather upon the supreme importance of its complete integration with the whole of one's life and, most particularly, with the complementary evidences of God and pathways to God already noted.

"I have urged that the suggestions of an eternal above and behind the temporal are derived from three independent sources, and that the agreement of the three in their common suggestion gives it a force which ought to be invincible....The full force of the vindication of religion cannot be felt unless we recognise that its weight is supported not by one strand only but by a cord of three intertwined strands

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70. Op.cit., p.80.

71. "Theism", in H.E.R.E. Vol.12, p.286.

we need to integrate Bonaventura and Thomas and Butler with Kant to appreciate the real strength of the believer's position....But I would end by a word of warning against a possible dangerous mistake. The fullest recognition of the reality of the transcendental and eternal 'other' world does not mean that eternity and time are simply disconnected or that a man is set the impossible task of living in two absolutely disparate environments at once. The two worlds are not in the end isolated from one another, since the one shines, here more, there less, transparently through the other....The true difference between the religious man and the worldly is that the religious man discharges the same duties as the other, but in different spirit. He discharges them 'to the glory of God', with God as his chief intention, that is, with his eye on an end the attainment of which lies beyond the bounds of the temporal and secular. The truest detachment is not retreat to the desert, but a life lived in the world in this spirit...Christianity has always set its face against the false treatment of the eternal and the temporal as though they were simply disconnected 'worlds'....If we are told on the one hand that a man who is in Christ is a 'new creation', we are also told by the great Christian theologians that 'grace' does not destroy 'nature' but perfects and transfigures it." 72

And behind all of our meditation about the "evidences" for God should be the recognition that our persistent searching is in itself proof that we have already in some measure found Him or been found by Him, The hold which value in each of its forms takes upon our life, prompting us to seek to find it, to understand it, to create it, to possess it, to be fully possessed by it--this 'grip' of value upon our deepest selves is itself the touch of the Eternal and the Ineffable upon our lives. We would not seek Him if we had not already  
72a  
known Him.

"Is a man tempted to doubt whether there really is any absolute and certain truth, whether all our

72. Essays Catholic and Critical, pp. 80; 63; 80; 81; 81; 81.

72a. I have here ventured to attribute to Prof. Taylor my own summary; I hope I am not untrue to his thought.



'truths' may not be mere 'human' or even 'personal' points of view....? Let him rethink himself that it is only because he is not unacquainted with truths that he can frame the notion of the absolutely true, and only because he has framed the notion that he can raise his doubt. So it is only because we are all along secretly aware that there are things which we ought unconditionally to do that the question whether any given accepted obligation is really unconditional can so much as be put. If we knew no beauty, we could not even ask ourselves whether our judgments about beauty rest on illusion. In like manner it is only because the absolutely Good and utterly Adorable has not left Himself without a witness in our hearts that we feel the need of an object to worship and are driven on from the worship of trees, or streams, or animals, or mighty men, or anthropomorphic deities, toward an object in which our adoration can at last find rest because that on which it is directed is adequate to sustain it...<sup>73</sup> Tu ne me chercherais pas si tu ne me possedais. Ne t'inquite donc!" 73

## V.

The Moral  
Argument.

Our interest must center, of course, upon Professor Taylor's handling of the moral argument specifically.

It is an indication of the comprehensiveness of his treatment of the theistic significance of morality that, at some point or other in his voluminous writings, support is given to practically every one of the eight types of moral argument which we distinguished earlier.<sup>74</sup> (1) On the whole the reasoning of The Faith of a Moralist adheres so closely to the pure Kantian model that we can sympathise with Professor Broad's judgment that "his main argument<sup>75</sup> is of the Kantian form", although we do not regard that

73. "Theism" in H.E.R.E., Vol.12, p.286. (I have taken the liberty of transposing from the beginning the quotation from Pascal, Pensees, vii, 555, to the end of the passage)

74. See above, p. 77ff.

75. C.D. Broad, in Mind, July 1931, p.365.

judgment as wholly accurate. Indeed in discussing Kant's own original formulation of the argument, Professor Taylor had revealed his belief that, with very minor modification, it could be made impregnable to criticism.<sup>76</sup> (II) But a more discriminating classification of The Faith of a Moralist would list it as what we have termed "a modified Kantian statement".<sup>77</sup> Its scope is by no means confined as Professor Broad would imply to an argument "from the existence of a moral obligation to the existence of those conditions without which the obligation would be incapable of fulfilment."<sup>78</sup> It seeks a more adequate analysis of the whole range of moral experiences and its implications. (III) And, as part of that analysis, there seems at one point to be a direct reference "from conscience to its source", the third type in our classification.<sup>79</sup>

"It is, in fact, a legitimate inference from the reality of a function to the reality of the environment where the function will find its use....To raise doubts on that point would be fatal to the admission of enough rationality in the case of things to make science itself possible." 80

(IV) We have already noted the weight which the briefer essay places upon the fact "that moral aspiration forever points beyond any goal achievable or even imaginable within human experience; it seems directed toward an immortal and eternal good".<sup>81</sup> And the greatest single concern of the

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76. Article "Theism" in H.E.R.E., Vol. 12, p. 281. See above, p. 60, where the reference is quoted in part.

77. See above, p. 80 .

78. C.D. Broad, *Op.cit.*, p. 365

79. See above, p. 82 .

80. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, p. 282

81. See above, p. 168; and p. 83.



larger work is to demonstrate that, at not one but half a dozen points, the moral life reaches beyond the limits of mortality for its sanction and its fulfilment.<sup>82</sup> (V) Professor Taylor's earliest affiliations were strongly idealistic and we have remarked that at this period his whole reliance was placed on an "ontological argument" closely akin to what we have called "the idealistic form".<sup>83</sup> In his later thought this strain has almost disappeared. But, unless I am mistaken, a single echo of it remains in the Gifford Lectures. The writer's second proof of the rootage of values in actuality is,<sup>84</sup> unless I completely misunderstand him, practically identical with the argument associated with the thought of Dean Rashdall--our own "idealistic form".<sup>85</sup>

(VI) Strangely enough there is not, as far as I can discover, any detailed development of the fact of a "moral order" in Professor Taylor's writings, except as it finds its place in his larger and masterly teleological synthesis.<sup>86</sup>

(VII) His cogent plea for the interpenetration of values and reality we shall note shortly.<sup>87</sup> (VIII) And his complete theistic position in its wider outlook is, in our judgment, as able an example of what we have termed an "inclusive metaphysical view" as may easily be discovered.<sup>88</sup><sup>89</sup>

So much for comprehensiveness. One would naturally look to his latest and fullest discussion of the theological

82. See below, pp. 188ff.

84. See below, pp. 183ff.

86. See below, pp. 214ff.

88. See above, p. 88.

83. See above, p. 162; and p. 84.

85. See F. R. Tennant, Philosophical Theology, Vol. II, p. 77.

87. See below, pp. 185ff.; and above, p. 87.

89. See summary of "The Vindication of Religion", above pp. 165ff. and below, pp. 225ff.

implications of morality, i.e. to the Gifford Lectures, for the most adequate treatment of these matters. This expectation is not fully justified by the facts. The work is replete with illuminating reflections. But as a theistic argument The Faith of a Moralist is, in the opinion of the present writer, at once less adequate in its scope and less persuasive in its presentation than the far briefer essay we have already considered. However because of its general importance we shall give some consideration to this work, using it as immediate background for our general comments on Professor Taylor's thought.

## VI.

### "The Faith of a Moralist.

It is not easy to make up one's mind about The Faith of a Moralist. It would be expected to represent the author's ripened wisdom on the most vital of all philosophical issues, his magnum opus in the field of constructive metaphysics. There are passages of unusual brilliance and indeed certain sections of the large two volumes which seem to vindicate the reader's anticipations. But it is by no means certain that in its entirety this can be called a great work, or that it will hold a permanent place as one among the most important in the Gifford series. This same difficulty of judgment seems to have troubled certain of the reviewers. It is perhaps not surprising to find the Dean of Winchester hailing it with unqualified enthusiasm, for his mind and Professor Taylor's have long been sympathetic



comrades in matters of theology.

"We have read no book in the last ten years which has impressed us more by the range and profundity of its thought, the fervour of its enthusiasm for truth and righteousness, and the force of its exposition and defence of the Christian Faith. The lover of Plato will find the essence of his teaching here distilled and christened by the greatest of living Platonists....Disciples of Von Hugel will find his rich and mature apologetic taken up into a philosophy which, losing nothing in depth, represents a wider and more liberal Catholicism." 90

Almost equally high praise from Dr. J.H.Muirhead is more significant. After speaking in the warmest terms of the writer's personal eminence as philosopher and theologian ("one of the acutest, as he is certainly the most learned, 91 supporters of Theism in Great Britain"), he says of the book itself, "It would not be too much to say that, had he been dean or bishop in the Church of England, his book might have a claim to rank with those of the great apologists of the faith from Hooker to Lightfoot." 92 On the other hand Professor C.D.Broad's note in Mind must be called, at the least, icy. It amounts to hardly more than an enumeration of a partial list of the reviewer's radical criticisms of the argument. Words of praise are confined to a final paragraph, added as though as afterthought and applying solely to the digressions in the text. 93

Several features of a general character in the method and style somewhat limit the force of the argument:-

90. E.G.Selwyn, in Theology, March 1931, p.121.

91. J.H.Muirhead, in Hibbert Journal, April 1931, p.553.

92. Ibid.

93. C.D.Broad, in Mind, July 1931, pp.364ff. See quotation below p.179.

a. We have already referred in passing to Professor Taylor's fondness for digression.<sup>94</sup> He permits his mind to be lured from its main course along one and another fascinating but comparatively irrelevant bypath. Of some of these digressions the author is fully aware; he enters apologies for them. But others seem to be unnoticed by him; one would judge them to be inevitable in thought so obviously overflowing with ideas on every manner of topic. The digressions are almost always interesting and not infrequently enlightening as well as delightful; but they do seriously interfere with the progress of thought, for both writer and reader, and consequently weaken the power of the case he is making. This limitation is especially unhappy for an interest like our own and in its contrast with the more orderly progress in the writing of the other thinkers we are considering. One may delight in Professor Taylor's lavish comment as Professor Muirhead does when he speaks, and quite truly, of "a book in which one constantly feels the richly endowed mind of the author beating against the limits that two large volumes impose."<sup>95</sup> Or one may, with Professor Broad, find this feature a satisfying compensation for certain other and more serious limitations:-

"I must remark that much of the value and interest of Professor Taylor's book is to be found in the long digressions which he constantly makes. These do, indeed, seriously interrupt the main argument. But they contain many of Professor Taylor's most

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94. See above, p.92 .

95. J.H.Muirhead, op.cit., p.553.



original and ingenious reflexions on all manner of subjects, and they are replete with the astonishingly wide and deep learning which he pours into all his writings." 96

In any event they are a delight to the casual reader, if an irritation to the serious student. Quite probably they should be accepted, like the other limitations we shall speak of, as characteristics of the writer's mind and with gratitude for an intellect so abundantly stored.

b. Less readily pardonable is the extent to which Professor Taylor makes his own constructive argument the occasion for long and sometimes wearisome attacks upon other writers. I cannot avoid the conclusion that this amounts to a very serious weakness. Again the attention is diverted from its main concern, but this time without always the compensation of refreshment or illumination. The argument takes on an unfortunate polemical tone. One would not be so disposed to object on this point if the targets of Professor Taylor's attack had been more widely selected from the thought of the centuries which he draws upon so readily for constructive purposes. But most of them are his contemporaries - principally McTaggart, Bradley and Bosanquet - and this tends to stamp his whole discussion with a note of contemporaneity regrettable in the exposition of a thinker's final philosophical credo. This is, I think, the most unfortunate consequence of this feature of the work.

c. From the point of view of this study, there is a  
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 96. C.D.Broad, op.cit., p.375.

further limitation inherent in the writer's method of handling his material. He is not primarily interested in a theistic proof but in a discriminating and acute analysis of moral living. Strictly speaking, The Faith of a Moralist contains no "argument for God". To be sure the opening discussion seeks to make good the most fatal shortcoming of Kant's position by showing the essential interdependence and interpenetration of Values and Actuality. From that point onward, it seems to be assumed that the main case has been established; whatever moral experience requires for its fulfilment may be regarded as guaranteed for it in actuality. The discussion is occupied with certain invariable features of the moral life, and there are suggestions as to the character of the world, of the future life and of God which are demanded if the moral life is to realise itself fully. But there is no attempt to prove that belief in these realities is justified. It is shown what a God adequate for morality would be like; there is no further evidence that such a God is. I think it is not unfair to say that, from the beginning of the third chapter of the first volume, the reality of God - and essentially the God of a rich and full Christian tradition - is assumed. Such light as we get concerning him comes almost by the way, as corollaries to fascinating comments on a varied panorama of moral issues.

d. There is a more fundamental limitation for which



Professor Taylor is less blameworthy. At not a few points, the discussion advances by dogmatic affirmation or argumentum ad hominem, rather than by reasoned and persuasive argument. I find the margins of my two volumes liberally peppered with question-marks and crosses. But I am not sure whether this failure of slow and patient cogency should be put to Professor Taylor's blame or credit. If one were to judge by this work alone, he would be tempted to the opinion that the author's greatest powers are critical and polemical, but not constructive. His mind appears too impatient thoroughly to weigh and estimate an opinion with which he feels instinctive disagreement, too intrigued by interesting diversions ever to erect by tedious labor a compelling positive position. But from acquaintance with others of Professor Taylor's constructive writings, especially the two essays discussed in a preceding section, I should rather conclude that this shortcoming in the Gifford Lectures is attributable to two reasons. Partly it is due to an inherent characteristic of the author's mind; but partly to the fact that, despite the importance of this lectureship, that mind was here by no means at its best throughout the two volumes. As for the first reason--Professor Taylor's native tendency to polemic--I should be inclined to forgive it gladly. On every page one feels oneself in contact with a soul which holds definite and strongly buttressed convictions and which must body them forth with vigor and incisiveness, at whatever pain to

oversensitive toes which may be trampled on in the process. Possibly we have had too much of courteous but half-hearted apologetic. Certainly positive affirmation, unequivocally put, is as arresting as it is refreshing. One surmises that Professor Taylor was built for advocacy, rather than conciliation. And one rejoices in the fact. But one must reluctantly acquiesce in Professor Broad's general comment that these volumes are more calculated to "impart a pleasing glow of self-satisfaction to the already convinced" <sup>97</sup> than to win the assent of "tough-minded" doubters.

## VII.

The  
Argument.

An introductory chapter considers the proper meaning and scope of Natural Theology and then proposes the three questions which the writer intends to make central for his whole work:-

1. Is the moral life autonomous; or does it aspire "towards a good which is strictly speaking 'eternal', outside the temporal order and incommensurable with anything falling within that order"? 98
2. If our true good is something infinite and eternal, can we imagine it as achievable through human effort alone; or does it necessarily presuppose an antecedent outgoing movement from the side of the eternal--'the grace of God'? 99
- 3a. "What is the kind and degree of autonomy which may reasonably be claimed for any science?"
- 3b. "Under what limitations is it possible to claim some kind of primacy for the science of theology?" 100

Actuality  
and Value.

Consideration of the first of these three questions brings us at once face to face with the whole troublesome

97. C.D.Broad, op.cit., p.368.

98. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol.I, p.13.

99. Op.cit., p.14.

100. Op.cit., p.15.

issue of the relation of facts to values--whether we are entitled to expect any "theological implications" from morality or whether morality by its very nature must tell us only of what "ought to be" but nothing of what "is". This, Professor Taylor regards, as "the most important problem in<sup>101</sup> the whole range of philosophy".

"The possibility of genuine worship and religion is absolutely bound up with a final coincidence of existence and value in an object which is at once the most real of beings and the good 'so good that none better can be conceived', at once the Alpha, the primary and absolute source of being, and the Omega, the ultimate goal of desire and endeavour." 102

Professor Taylor proposes three considerations in support of the necessary connection between existence and value. They do not traverse any significantly new ground. In essence, they closely parallel Professor Sorley's arguments for the objectivity of value; indeed, Professor Taylor confesses the agreement of his own point of view with that of<sup>103</sup> Moral Values and the Idea of God.

a) All reference to value is reference to values in the concrete not in the abstract. We do not think of "virtue, art, science, health" as having value in themselves but only as actually expressed in human experience. It is not truth which has value, but knowledge of the truth; indeed, "the knowledge we value as good is primarily always 'knowledge in act', the life of an existent individual intelligence<sup>104</sup> discovering or contemplating truth." So, clearly, in moral  
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101. Op.cit.,p.36.

102. Op.cit.,p.31.

103. Op.cit.,p.37.

104. Op.cit.,p.40.



practice, it is the virtuous act which we admire not virtue in the abstract. Similarly, beauty has worth only in terms of someone's appreciation of it. Furthermore it is clear to value is always reference that reference to something which is existent, either in fact or ex hypothesi. To sum up then, "(1) the truth, beauty, goodness to which we ascribe worth are in all cases 'concreted', embodied in individuals of which they are the constitutive forms, and our ascription of worth is only significant in view of this embodiment of the 'universal' in the individual; (2) in all such judgements of value the reference to personal activities is always more or less explicitly present." 105

b) A truth is a proposition; and a proposition is always an assertion about what is. But all assertions with a meaning, i.e. all assertions about a value, "make a claim,<sup>106</sup> whether well-founded or not, to be true and not to be false." The fact that values cannot be dated or located should not estop us from conceding their existence since the same limitation might well hold of other types of genuine existents.<sup>107</sup>

c) The alleged dichotomy of existence and value "falsifies the facts of real life where existence and value appear always as distinguishable, but always as conjoined.

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105. Op.cit., p.45.

106. Op.cit., p.50.

107. Unless I misunderstand him, Professor Taylor is here associating himself with Dean Rashdall in what we have termed the "idealistic form" of the moral argument. (See above, p.84 and p.176.)

....In life as we all, including the laboratory worker himself, live it, all is given, facts and valuations together<sup>108</sup> in an undivided whole." "What is given is neither a configuration devoid of sensible quality, nor a number of qualitatively definite disconnected sensa, but a single most imperfectly discriminated whole, in which shape, colour, size, odour, sound, are all present from the outset, and progress in knowledge means, not making unauthorised additions to this whole, but becoming increasingly sensitive to distinctions within it."<sup>109</sup> I no more put the quality of courage into the courageous man than I put the colour of blue into the sky; in each case and equally I find the quality designated already there in the object known. The function of my mind is not creation, but discovery.

"What confronts us in actual life is neither facts without value nor values attached to no facts, but fact revealing value, and dependent, for the wealth of its content, on its character as thus revelatory, and values which are realities and not arbitrary fancies, precisely because they are embedded in fact and give it its meaning. To divorce the two would be like trying to separate the sounds of a great symphony from its musical quality." 110

Therefore, values must have light to cast upon the real nature of Ultimate Reality.

Of the validity of these three arguments for the interdependence of fact and value we have already spoken at some length. The first is Professor Sorley's major contention; we have recognized its soundness.<sup>111</sup> The second is more original with Professor Taylor, and less convincing; one's

108. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, p. 55; 56.

109. Op.cit., p. 59.

110. Op.cit., p. 61. Cp. our own similar view above, pp. 66ff.

111. See above, pp. 112ff.

estimate of its weight will be governed by one's attitude on certain prior questions in logic. The third is the consideration which we ourselves pressed with considerable insistence against Kant's original severance of facts and values.<sup>112</sup> It is Professor Taylor's chief reliance; he presents it with clarity and, as it seems to us, unanswerable persuasiveness.

The most important comment to be made upon this whole section is not one of criticism in details, but rather a more fundamental query which Professor Broad has raised--<sup>113</sup> as to whether this argument, however convincing, is really necessary for Professor Taylor's main purpose. The weight of his confidence rests upon the third point which in essence is a vigorous criticism of Kant. But his own constructive argument from this point forward is itself almost identical with that of Kant. In establishing the genuinely objective ground of values and the interpenetration of the two aspects of experience which Kant had sought to sever, the way is prepared for a fresh formulation of the argument from moral experience to God. From this point, a course might have been traced, somewhat akin to Professor Sorley's, to a thoroughly convincing position. But the opportunity is passed by. Instead, Professor Taylor turns aside to reassert Kant's claim that the fact of moral obligation in itself implies the reality of the conditions without which the obligation could not be fulfilled. But for the argument in this form, it is no more necessary for him than it was for Kant himself to establish the interpenetration of values and actuality.

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112. See above, pp. 66 ff.

113. C.D. Broad, op.cit., p. 365.



## The Idea of God.

We have pointed out that the coherent logical sequence of reasoning ends here. From this point forward, consideration focusses on one after another diverse aspects of moral experience. In almost every case, attention is drawn to certain features of the character of God which the particular aspect of the moral life under review would seem to imply. And it is assumed that these implied features must be true of reality. But no evidence or argument in vindication of them is presented. Nor are the scattered fragments of suggestion concerning the nature of God gathered into a unified summary; the task of synthesis must be undertaken by each reader for himself. However, it is quite possible to piece together the individual bits; and from such a synopsis a coherent and lofty idea of God results. The implications for our thought of God imbedded in the remaining chapters of these two large volumes may be summarised as follows:-

a. It is the characteristic of our moral life that it is at one and the same time rooted in the flux of temporal events, and yet dependent for its fulfillment upon a perfect and absolute good and upon the possibility of possessing that perfect good for all eternity. Two consequences follow:- 1) the actuality of God as the required perfect and final good; and 2) the assurance of an eternal life for the moral personality.

"Full achievement of the aspiration which lies behind all moral advance is only possible if there really is a good by the quest and attainment of which human endeavour will be finally unified and made single

of aim. The moral quest will be self-defeating unless there is an object to sustain it which embodies in itself good complete and whole, so that in having it we are possessing that which absolutely satisfies the heart's desire and can never be taken from us. The possession must be possession of a 'thing infinite and eternal', and this points to the actuality of God, the absolute and final good, as indispensably necessary if the whole moral effort of mankind is not to be doomed ab initio to frustration. On the other hand, if the effort is to reach its goal, the possession of the supreme good on our part must also be itself final; we must be able to look forward to having the infinite good, and to having it in perpetuity.... Thus morality itself seems to imply, as a condition of being something more than a mere crying for the moon, an eternal destiny for the human person, and so far as life becomes an endeavor to adjust the self to such a destiny, it would be ceasing to be merely ethical and taking on a specifically religious character." 114

b. Likewise, when we bring the sense of moral obligation under more careful scrutiny, we discover that it is always a sense of obligation not to a relative good but to an absolute good; That that absolute good forever stirs within us a restless dissatisfaction with whatever meager moral achievement may be ours; that this absolute good is but slowly revealed to us and gradually and partially apprehended by us as we grow in moral grace; and that its recognised right to our worship as well as to our obedience suggests that it springs from a living, intelligent, moral Will.

"All the moral progress of individual man, or of societies, has found its inspiration in a 'divine discontent', a sense of best which is beyond all the good that has so far been achieved. It is the men who will be content with nothing but the best whom we have to thank for every serious advance which man and society have actually made towards even a moderately 'better'." 115

"We learn what the law of the moral life is by obeying it; clear knowledge does not precede performance, but follows upon it.... The moral law by which our conduct is to be judged is.... gradually disclosed,

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114. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, pp. 105-6. Cp. above, p. 168(2).  
115. Op. cit., p. 139.



as we gradually grow into humanity. Its primal seat, then, cannot be in a reason which is already ours by possession, but must be in that 'reason' into conformity with which we are slowly growing. It is a reason which is only communicated to us in part and gradually, and that in proportion to our faithfulness to the revelations already received. We do not make the law, we discover it and assent to it, and it is for that reason that no attitude to the source of the law is adequate, unless it has passed from mere respect into that unqualified reverence which we know as adoration and worship. And we can only worship.... that which is already all, and more than all, we mean when we speak of ourselves as living, intelligent, moral, and personal.... Thus viewed, the 'supreme good' takes on the full character of a living, spiritual, and personal God, and the life of fulfilment of duty the character of a daily appropriation of the riches of God." 116

c. An even more particular examination of the consciousness of moral failure, the sense of sin, reveals that, in its deepest, noblest and truest instinct, it is always felt not as the violation of a wise regulation but as an offense against a supremely worshipful person.

"When we feel as we ought to feel about the evil in ourselves, we cannot help recognising that our position is not so much that of someone who has broken a wise and salutary regulation, as of one who has insulted or proved false to a person of supreme excellence, entitled to whole-hearted devotion.... If we are to think adequately of the shame of disloyalty to our best spiritual ideal, we have to learn to think of that ideal as already embodied in the living and personal God, and of falsehood as personal disloyalty and ingratitude to God....

"For the moralist, belief in the true and living God cannot be relegated to the position of an 'extra', which we may perhaps be allowed on sufferance to add to our respect for duty or regard for the good of our fellow-men, if physicist, biologist, and anthropologist will be kind enough to raise no objection. Belief in the absolute reality of God, and love for the God in whom we believe, are at the heart of living morality. The good of our fellow-men is unworthily thought of when we do not conceive that good as a life of knowledge of God and transformation by the knowledge into the likeness of God. And the love which arises from



our belief is the one motive adequate to secure the full and whole-hearted discharge of the duties laid on us by our ideal." 117

d. Once again, when we turn to the problem of adequate motivation for the moral life, it becomes apparent that man would never aspire to an ideal quite beyond his reach had he not been touched by that ideal in very fact, in actuality. His aspiration is response to such an initiative from the side of the ideal. Moreover he sees that ideal as in some sense part of himself, but of his potential self-- of himself as he may become. Here we confront God both immanent and transcendent--immanent as the ideal already in some measure within the human self, transcendent as the ideal forever beyond the realisation of the self and summoning it to ever higher endeavour. There follow important corollaries for the doctrine of God:--1) He is not merely the Maker of men, but also their Redeemer and Sanctifier; 2) He is the inspirer of all their high endeavour; 3) human moral effort is a response to this touch from the divine; 4) God is in his inmost nature self-giving. Such a conception of God involves anthropomorphism; it is the anthropomorphism which is inevitable in any ethical theology.

"If a man is to be raised in his whole being above his present unsatisfactory level, it is not enough that he should be able to conceive of a self better than that he now possesses. The 'ideal' must be able to draw him with an overpowering force; it must be an efficient as well as final cause.....

"In all moral advance the ultimate 'efficient cause' must be the real eternal source of both becoming and value. The initiative in the process of 'assimilation to God' must come from the side of the eternal; it must be God who first comes to meet us, and who, all through the moral life itself, 'works in

us', in a sense which is more than metaphorical. Our moral endeavours must be genuinely ours, but they must be responses to intimate actual contacts in which a real God moves outward to meet his creatures, and by the contact at once sustains and inspires the appropriate response on the creature's part." 118

"No philosophy of pure 'immanence' can take the moral life seriously....A man cannot revolve the power to rise above his present moral level from his own inherent strength, because the process is one of rising above himself, and, in the moral as in the physical world, you cannot lift yourself by the hair of your own head....Morality itself, taken in earnest, thus involves the 'supernatural', in the proper sense of that word, as its environment and daily nutriment." 119

"We may proceed to formulate some important conclusions concerning the doctrine of God....

"(1)....An ethical religion is inevitably....a religion for the 'twice-born'. Thou must be born again is the central proposition of all genuine morality, and it is therefore indispensable to an ethical theology that it should conceive its God not only as the Maker who has brought man, like the rest of the creatures into temporal actuality, but as the source and sustainer of the aspirations by which man is made a new creature and puts off his first merely self-contained and temporally confined selfhood. God, that is,....must be conceived not only as Creator, but also as Redeemer and Sanctifier....

"(2) The God of a theism which is definitely ethical cannot be thought of as related to man, and the system of creatures generally, simply as Creator or a 'great First Cause'....We know our true good, which is no other than God Himself, by obscure, but none the less real and impressive, personal contacts with God....He is the inspirer of endeavour in all of us....An ethical Theism has then to conceive God as the 'efficient', as well as the 'exemplary' cause of the whole moral life. From its humblest beginnings that life is, at every step, one of transformation into the likeness of that which we contemplate....

"(3)....If God is not only the goal, but the author and sustainer of moral effort, the whole moral endeavour of man must be a response to what we can only call a movement from the other side.... We love God because God first loved us....

"When we use such language, we know, of course, that we are speaking 'anthropomorphically', and that all 'anthropomorphic' utterances about the divine are



imperfect and attended with danger. But the attempt to expel anthropomorphism from our language about God is attended with worse dangers....An ethical theology is necessarily anthropomorphic, in the sense that it interprets God and God's ways by the analogy of all that is most nobly human, and always with the further caution that as a completely humanised man would be all we can picture to ourselves of what is admirable in man and something more, which we cannot yet picture because we ourselves are so far from being wholly humanised, so God is all that perfect human excellence would be and abundantly more. Thus the simple statement that God, whose initiative is the source of all our advance in good, loves man as a father loves his children is inaccurate only because it ascribes too little to God....

"(4)....The God of a truly moral Theism (must be one whose) fundamental activity must involve expansion. And when we think of His action upon the world, we can only think of it as a life in which He gives Himself freely and generously to His creatures, that they may be able to give themselves to Him.... He cannot be wholly blessed, except in blessing....

"It is important to an ethical Theism to insist that there is no necessity external and superior to the Creator; He neither creates because He is constrained to create, nor gives the created world the structure it actually has because that structure is dictated by antecedent conditions. He is the foundation and absolute prius of all actuality and all possibility and He is all, and more than all, we understand by an intelligent and righteous will....Creation is an act of free and intelligent choice....

"Because the mutual love in which each party bestows himself freely and completely and is freely and completely received is ethically the supreme spiritual activity, the life of God is thought of as involving an internal distinction as well as an internal unity, in order that the whole activity of the divine life may be one of perfect and unlimited self-bestowal." 120.

e. Finally, our contemplation of what may be the conditions of life after death suggests one further characteristic of the life of God--his vision of all time as though within a single present.

"How the world is apprehended by God none of us would venture to say, but we cannot conceive that it is not apprehended as an ordered scheme exhibiting



what is fundamental to the moral life, the one-sided and inversible relation of real causal dependence. In that sense, I take it, there must be a prius and posterius in the world as apprehended by God. But there is no prius or posterius in God, or in God's apprehension of the world. The whole process, prius and posterius alike, would fall for God, who never becomes, but is, within a single present." 121.

This completes the deductions to be made from moral experience directly. The conclusion is succinctly summarised as "a belief in the final coincidence of the 'ought' and the 'is', in virtue of their common source in a transcendent living and personal Good--one, complete, eternal" <sup>122</sup> .

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The second series of Gifford Lectures was concerned with the relation of the natural theology developed in the first series and just presented in outline to the theologies of the historic religions. It would not be expected to make much addition to the positive conception of God. Such additional light as is proffered comes largely in the form of 'suggestions' of what one would expect in the highest type of living religion, linked with the indication that these 'suggestions' are vindicated in the concrete faith of Christianity. But here, even less than in the earlier volume is proof or supporting argument attempted; the lecturer felt himself estopped from any such apologetic program by the conditions of his lectureship. The most important of these supplementary 'suggestions' are:-

f. A God whose essential nature is self-giving would be one constantly revealing himself to men; but it would be anticipated that the supreme instance of his self-revelation-  
 121. Op. cit., pp. 426-7.      122. Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 1.  
 123. Vol. II, "Natural Theology and the Positive Religions."

tion to the human race would occur through a concrete human life. Precisely such a divine revelation Christianity claims to possess in its doctrine of the Christ.

"The religion which grapples most successfully with the practical task of reorganising life with an eternal good at its center will be the religion which brings its God down most intimately into contact with the temporal historical process, not one of those which simply set Him outside and beyond it, and consequently that it will find its historical connecting link between God and man in a personality standing in a much closer relation to God than that of the prophet.... We should naturally expect in such a religion what we actually find in Christianity, that its historical revelation of God consists primarily neither in a body of propositions about God, nor in a code of precepts from God, but in the whole of a concrete divine personality and life; that, in fact, the 'revealer' would be the content of his own revelation. And for the same reason we might, I think, anticipate a priori that the intellectual elaboration of the self-disclosure of the divine through the detail of a concrete human life, its abstentions and its silences, no less than its acts and utterances, would inevitably involve.... a doctrine of the person of an historical 'Christ'." 124.

g. But the self-disclosure of the divine will not be thought of as occurring solely through a single individual, but rather there preeminently. Of other self-disclosures, however made, two invariable characteristics may be underlined--they will appear in that which is definitely historical, and the vivid marks of historicity will be recognised as verifying rather than weakening their authenticity; in every appearance there will be felt an element of the wholly given, of that "refractoriness to complete intellectual analysis" which is the stamp not only of objectivity but also, in spiritual experience, of what men call the supernatural.

124. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. II, pp. 121-2.

125. Op.cit., p. 213.



"If our human knowledge of God is to be more than personal opinion, there must be control of our personal intellectual constructions by something which is not constructed but received.... We must remember that there is, in the case of our knowledge of God also (as in our knowledge of Nature), that which is simply received, not invented by ourselves, and is therefore, in its nature, simply authoritative, a genuine control on the wilfulness of our individualism. It is not by 'searching' that we find out God. And it is clear what this control must be. It must be the experience of rich, but confused, contact with the supernatural which plays, in our knowledge of God, the same part that immediate contact through sense with a confused 'other' does in our knowledge of nature." 126

"It is the same God who discloses Himself, at different levels, through the order of nature, through prophets charged with a special message, through a Son who is the 'express image' of His person. In all three cases we have a contact with the supreme source of actuality and value, mediated by a contact with something or someone historical and temporal.... There is an element of the wholly given and trans-subjective which is absolutely authoritative, has unquestionable right to control our thinking or acting, just because it is so utterly given to us, not made by us.... Whenever in nature or supernature, we are face to face with objectivity not to be explained away, God is speaking, but whether God speaks through the processes of nature, through a specific message brought by a specific messenger, or through a unique human life as a whole, the communications, of very different worth and depth, coming to us in these different ways, all come through a channel which is creaturely, and none of them ever wholly loses all marks of the creaturehood of the channel." 127.

h. Finally, as in the introductory volume, we are brought at the end to the reminder of the differences which must mark the divine experience as we try to think of it in terms taken from our own finite experience. It is a salutary reminder of the necessity for tentativeness, humility and a 'sane agnosticism' in human speculation on the nature of God.

"We are forced to recognise that the ideal type

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126. Op.cit., pp.220-1.

128. Op.cit., p.404.

127. Op.cit., pp.236-7.

of individuality, perfect and complete personality, can only be actual in an individual whose own inner character is not only the dominant and principal, but the complete and sole determinant of the individual life, and such an individual could be no other than the ens realissimum, God." 129.

"If we have once understood that eternity is the characteristic form not of inaction, but of activity of self-expression, we shall hardly be likely to retain the prejudice that emotion has no place in a strictly eternal life.... There will be good reason for believing that emotion has its place in the divine life as for holding the same thing of intellectual apprehension.... Emotion in God must be of a different tonality from emotion in ourselves, since there it cannot have the special characters which tinge even our richest emotional life, derived as it is from the experiences of aspiration to an unattained self-expression, of baffled endeavour, endurance of final impoverishment or defeat.... Neither in our own experience of knowing nor in our own experience of feeling do we ever reach the point at which there is actual achieved and complete saturation of subject by object, full and final possession of object by subject. Yet we may be sure that this point is always reached and rested in in God's perfect possession of His own being. Our joy, and our self-apprehension, at their highest, can only be distant analogues of such an experience; but it is as true that the analogy is real as it is that it is distant." 130.

#### Conclusion.

At their close, the Gifford Lectures return to reconsider the question which had been proposed at their beginning--the degree of autonomy and of interdependence of the different sciences and, more specifically, the character of the authority to be claimed for theology, the science of religion. The writer's irenic conclusion is that each great department of human knowledge of reality should be conceded unlimited freedom to deal with its own material without interference from any correlative department. Of the worker in each field, it should be required only that "the matter upon which his thought works shall be something genuinely given, and that in his reflective elaboration of it he shall be true to it." <sup>131</sup> The disciplines to which

129. Op.cit., p.365.

130. Op.cit., pp.370-2.

131. Op.cit., p.390.



so full a measure of autonomy may be attributed are considered to be three--natural science, ethics and theology. But it must be expected that the conclusions of two or more of these independent avenues to truth may show apparent conflict. Then no premature and facile reconciliation is to be sought. Such conflicts counsel careful reexamination of premisses and positions by the contradictory sciences. But in the end we may be forced to accept the conflicting conclusions unreconciled. Above all, the straining after a completely synoptic view is not advised. "Systematic all-round clarity is hardly possible except for a vision content to remain on the surface." <sup>132</sup> A vision of the whole in which every difficulty had vanished and all conflicts had been obliterated would be possible only to an omniscience which is not ours. And here, especially, the 'sane agnosticism' which has already been suggested is to be strongly recommended,

"It seems to me, then, that in the matter of the claim to autonomy, theology, ethics, and natural knowledge stand all on one footing. All have a right to exist, and each has the right to deal with its own problems without dictation from either of the others....

"The conclusions of natural science cannot be wholly irrelevant to those of moral science, nor the conclusions of either to divinity, since all alike deal with elements in the same given. Life and the world are, in the end, one and not many, and therefore any version of the doctrine of the 'double truth' must, in the long run, be destructive of the ideal of truth itself.....

"It is our duty as rational beings to aim at the unified view, but it is surely an illusion to imagine that the unified view will ever be within the grasp of finite intelligences, condemned by their finitude to get at truth piecemeal. Any account of the real which is to do justice to all the features it presents to us is bound to be untidy in places, to be scored with seams and ridges....

"If we are to find that more excellent way, we must, I should say, safeguard ourselves in all our thinking, alike as theologians, as metaphysicians, as workers in the various sciences, by a real and frank confession of a sane agnosticism, unwelcome to the temper of a self-confident age.... A genuine agnosticism, which is neither that of indolent indifference nor that of despair, means something different. It means the repression not of another man's self-confidence, but of my own.... It means.... in other words, scrupulous conscientiousness in distinguishing what is really forced upon me by the given from what may be personal and arbitrary in my interpretation of the given, and capable of being shown to be so by comparison with the attempts of others to say what they find given to them....

"The very fact of our own existence and the existence of our world sets us problems, and thereby imposes on us the moral obligation of dealing with problems, not all of which can be treated by the special methods of natural science, nor yet all by the special methods of theology, and thus justifies the existence of both studies, while the necessarily tentative character of all our human thinking makes it impossible that either should ever be simply absorbed into metaphysics. That consummation would only be possible if the actual could be completely rationalised without ceasing to be a given actual. And if we were in possession of a completely rationalised actual, we should no longer have either science or theology; both would have given place to something better than either--vision." 133

### Criticism.

It will be conceded<sup>d</sup>, I think, that the group of extracts we have given present a clear, coherent and extraordinarily attractive conception of God. But it is not unfair to add that the casual reader of the two volumes from which they have been drawn might easily lay his study aside without the impression of so definite and persuasive a theism. If the quotations lose something in individual colour by being lifted from their respective settings, the conclusion to which they unitedly contribute gains not a little in clarity and power. Here is further ground for

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133. Op.cit., Chapter IX, espec. pp. 394; 399; 397; 404-5; 407.



questioning the wisdom of Professor Taylor's delightful but diffuse style.

If we had further critical comment to add, it would be to raise the question whether the meager metaphysical argument of Volume I, Chapter II ("Actuality and Value"<sup>134</sup>) can support so considerable a metaphysical superstructure. To be sure, Professor Taylor's theism, like that of Professor Baillie, might have been put forward as an example of the pure Kantian type.<sup>135</sup> It might hold its great convictions in the final analysis by faith, without supporting evidence beyond their necessity as postulates for the moral life. (There are strains in the argument which seem to indicate that this is the author's intention, as we shall note in a moment.) But I do not understand that this is the writer's design; he intends to vindicate the reasonableness of inference from morality to God. The supporting argument here presented lacks something of adequacy. The mere establishment of a locus for values within reality (and this seems to be the sum of the argument of the section on "Actuality and Value") would justify the claim that moral experience must throw some light on ultimate reality; but hardly the claim that all the demands of the moral consciousness are ipso facto guaranteed satisfaction. With Sorley this was hardly more than the first step of a theistic proof. Professor Taylor's case stands sorely in need of Professor Sorley's closely reasoned argument.

To be sure, it might be held, as indeed it is by

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134. See above, pp. 183-7. 135. See above, p. 78.

Professor Broad, that Professor Taylor intends to follow hard on the example of Kant and furnish no evidence for his metaphysical conclusions other than the fact that they are 'demands' of the moral consciousness. There are at least two important passages which lend strong support to this reading of his mind.<sup>a)</sup> It is clear that the argument for immortality is put squarely on the Kantian basis.

"A moral argument for immortality should take the form of an argument that the destruction of our human personalities must stultify the whole moral life by making its supreme end unattainable.... The argument will be, succinctly formulated, that since the moral law can rightfully command us to live as aspirants to eternity, eternity must really be our destination." 137

But a moment later we are told:-

"It is, in fact, a legitimate inference from the reality of a function to the reality of the environment where the function will find its use." 138

This is, I should suppose, an extension of the inner logic of Kant's argument which the latter might not readily have recognised as a valid interpretation of his own critical reasoning. In any event, belief in immortality is here presented as a proper corollary of certainty of the ultimate status of the moral life; and whether it is held on any solid foundation than the appeal to "faith" will depend upon whether reasonable evidence is relied upon for establishing the status of the moral life in ultimate reality. This carries us to the second critical passage.

b) Toward the very end of the second volume, in the concluding discussion of "Faith and Knowledge", there occur these interesting statements:-

"The conviction of the rationality of the world,

136. C.D. Broad, op.cit., p.365. See above, p. 187.

137. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol.I, p.281. 138. Op.cit., p.282.



on which all pursuit of truth is founded, is strictly a postulate of the 'practical' reason. An historical world is not rational in the sense that it ever has been, or ever will be, actually rationalised, made self-explanatory and self-justifying, by the labours of philosophers, even to the extent of successfully mapping out its ground-plan with finality. "It is our unending task to divine the supreme pattern of the real, and so to rationalise it, to the best of our power, knowing well that the element of the disconcerting and perplexing will never be eliminated." 139

Note that here it is not only the character of the world as 'moral' but the character of the world as 'rational' which is made a postulate of the practical reason. In brief it is simply a vigorous reminder that we never are finally successful in reducing our world to logical categories, and that science as well as morality and religion advances at each step of progress on a never-completely-proven assumption of the inherent rationality of the universe. That the assumption must forever elude full proof is inevitable in the character of our experience as historical. These are points on which we ourselves would wish to insist with some emphasis. That it is Professor Taylor's intention so to extend the meaning of 'postulate of the practical reason', and that he intends nothing more, is strongly suggested by a closely parallel passage:-

"When we say that the world of the historical is rational and that its rationality is a postulate of sane philosophy, all that we have a right to mean is that this world has a definite pattern which connects its parts in a thoroughgoing unity....The proposition that the historical, that is, the actual, is rational, or intelligible, is, rightly conceived, an imperative of the practical reason. It is a command to ourselves never to stop short in the business of looking for a higher and more dominant pattern in the course of the historical than any we have yet found, not an assertion that the task has been achieved. The world is there

as a problem; we have to 'rationalise' it, but, in fact, we never succeed fully in carrying out the work." 140.

But, somewhat in contrast with these two statements, may be placed a section which occurs in immediate proximity to the first of the two quotations:-

"So far as the sciences are concerned, the real world might equally well be an assemblage of mindless and purposeless automata, or a commonwealth of free and purposiveness agents under the moral government of God; only the extra-scientific consideration that if the first account is the true one genuine moral responsibility must be an illusion justifies our acceptance of the second, and the justification has no force except for the man who accepts the fact of moral responsibility, and accepts it, not because there would be a demonstrable absurdity in denying it, but because he is personally a man of high inward morality, whose life would become purposeless if morality were dismissed as an illusion. So far, as 141 it seems to me, Kant's procedure is thoroughly sound."

We have here been reintroduced to an unrelieved Kantian vein of thought. It is such passages, no doubt, which have prompted Professor Broad to contend that Professor Taylor has no need of evidence for the status of values in ultimate reality since, "his main argument is of the Kantian form, viz., from the existence of a moral obligation to the existence of those conditions without which the obligation 142 would be incapable of fulfillment." But the general tenor of the discussion and, far more, his direct teaching 143 in his other writings some of which have been reviewed above would seem to support our own conclusion that this is not Professor Taylor's more fundamental position; he means to support the demands of the moral consciousness by a general metaphysical argument. In any event, we are left in some

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140. Op.cit., 170-2.

141. Op.cit., pp.379-380.

142. C.D. Broad, op.cit., p.565. 143. See, especially, quotations on pp. 172-3 above.



real confusion in the matter; and I am inclined to think the reader's bafflement may reflect a certain lack of clarity in the writer's own thought. It is one thing to admit, that the nature of ultimate reality can never be fully known by us, though it is ever being progressively better known and such increasing knowledge brings an increasing pragmatic verification of the postulate of its complete rationality. It is quite another thing to hold that ultimate reality can never be assuredly known in its real nature and that its rationality must forever remain merely a postulate of the practical reason, held by faith, as Kant encouraged men to do. It is the elementary distinction between the "inherently unknowable" and the "unknown--the not yet known, and doubtless never by us to be fully known, but still the ever to be better known" <sup>144</sup>. By the same token, it is one thing to recognise that full proof that our values are grounded in ultimate reality and that they have the support of the reality behind the world must forever be wanting--the final certainty must be one of faith--although our advancing understanding of our world and of the testimony of history lends steadily mounting support to the postulate. It is quite another thing to hold that the moral postulate can be maintained only as an act of faith, lest the moral consciousness be outraged. It is the difference between regarding faith as the final court of appeal or the only court of appeal in the justification of theistic belief. The latter was Kant's position; and we

144. A.S. Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy, p. 165.

shall very shortly meet it again in the thought of  
<sup>145</sup>  
 Professor Baillie. But as I understand him, it is the former  
 of these two alternatives which Professor Taylor is con-  
 cerned to support, but his intention is by no means clear.

The frailty of Professor Taylor's substantiation  
 of the objectivity of values and their rootage in the  
 heart of reality is all the more regrettable when we dis-  
 cover that he had strong supporting evidence at his finger-  
 tips. His position could have been strengthened by appeal  
 to either epistemological or cosmological considerations;  
 both lines of argument are well presented in the body of  
 his work but in neither instance is the weight of the evi-  
 dence brought to bear upon this particular point. It is in  
 the discussion of authority that the most satisfactory dis-  
<sup>146</sup>  
 cussion of the writer's theory of knowledge occurs. He  
 there develops a type of natural or critical realism so  
 nearly akin to that which Baron Von Hugel made the concern  
 of all his later reflection that one can hardly resist the  
 hazard that the one has strongly influenced the other.  
 The heart of the case is--in both our knowledge of the  
 physical world through sense-experience and in our knowledge  
 of the realm of values through artistic or moral apprecia-  
 tion, we are dealing with a confused though real 'given'  
 which we do not create but which comes to us from a 'beyond';  
 in both cases, and in both cases alike, the energy of reflec-  
 tion should be directed merely to the better understanding  
<sup>147</sup>  
 of this 'given' data of experience. An interpretation of  
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145. See below, pp. 213ff.

146. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. II, pp. 213-237.

147. See quotations given above on pp. 158-61; 196.



the process of knowing along these lines claims for the reality apprehended through value-appreciation a status in reality fully as objective and as valid as that conceded to the reality known through the senses with which the sciences deal. It is true that this position had been anticipated in the third argument for the objectivity of values<sup>148</sup>; but it was there declared rather than expounded and defended. The whole of the subsequent inferential reasoning from the demands of the moral consciousness to the character of God would have been greatly strengthened if the epistemological premisses of the author had been clearly presented early in his discussion.

The other line of support to be proposed is more important--that from cosmological and teleological considerations. As we shall note below, one of the most masterly Weltanschauung which modern thought has given us is to be found in the course of Professor Taylor's consideration of "Other-worldliness".<sup>149</sup> In brief, he has here brought to unity the soundest elements in the philosophy of 'emergent evolution' of Professors Lloyd-Morgan and Alexander, the 'philosophy of organism' of Professor Whitehead, and the profoundly religious 'critical realism' of Baron Von Hugel. The outcome is a portrayal of the "real world" as "a hierarchised, or many-levelled, whole" in which "the 'dominant' characters of the pattern should only be recognisable for what they really are when we set ourselves to study it in the light of the richest subpatterns of all, those of the highest structures known to us, living and intelligent".<sup>148</sup> Op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 55ff. See above, pp. 185ff.  
<sup>149</sup> Op.cit., pp. 356-377.

creatures,"<sup>150</sup> Comprehension of the totality of this organic pattern which our world is lies beyond our powers, but we are able to discern the relatively dominant features. And it is quite clear that "'values' are simply the dominant features in the pattern of reality."<sup>151</sup> "In our view, the so-called 'values' must be the most potent of all the 'forces' or influences which shape the course of actuality."<sup>152</sup> This is precisely the line of reasoning which we suggested might greatly have strengthened Professor Sorley's argument and which we shall make the starting-point of our own constructive suggestions<sup>153</sup> --that the most convincing evidence of the vital status of values in reality is to be discovered through a teleological view of the world which reveal values as organic to the whole of reality, but as the consummatory level in the hierarchy of degrees of reality. Professor Taylor is quite right in claiming that "this is the final justification of the refusal we long ago made to admit any ultimate dualism of a realm of actuality and a distinct and separate realm of value"<sup>154</sup>. The pity is that this clinching argument had not been presented 'long ago', that the intervening inferences might have carried greater conviction.

The sum of the matter is that the theistic proof in these Gifford Lectures suffers through a too exclusive dependence upon the evidence from morality. The author's earlier wisdom was the sounder:-

"I have urged that the suggestions of an eternal above and behind the temporal are derived from three independent sources, and that the agreement of the three in their common suggestion gives it a force

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150. Op.cit., p.362.

152. Op.cit., p.375.

154. Op.cit., p.374.

151. Op.cit., p.374.

153. See above, pp.121f & below, pp.358ff.



which ought to be invincible....The full force of the vindication of religion cannot be felt unless we recognise that its weight is supported not by one strand only but by a cord of three intertwined strands; we need to integrate Bonaventura and Thomas and Butler with Kant to appreciate the real strength of the believer's position." 154

In summary then, our principal criticisms of The Faith of a Moralist would be:--

1. The diffuseness of its style and the author's inveterate fondness for digression seriously interfere with the cohesion of the argument and, consequently, diminish its power.
2. The case for the rootage of values in objective reality is not presented with maximum strength. More constructively, the progress of the argument would have been greatly aided if a clear exposition of the author's theory of knowledge and of his world-view had been made early in the work.
3. The argument rests too heavily upon the facts of the moral life alone, to the neglect in the first place of the evidence from other forms of the experience of value, and in the second place of the important evidence from a philosophy of Nature and a total world-view.
4. The author does not make clear how much importance he attaches to 'evidences' for the reality of God, how far he believes all the great beliefs of religion to be held beyond evidence, by faith.

Certain other limitations which spring from inherent characteristics of the writer's mind or personality we have had occasion to note earlier.<sup>155</sup> One or two further weaknesses which mark his thought as a whole rather than this particular work will be mentioned in our final comment.<sup>156</sup>

#### VIII.

#### he Four Normative Issues.

Professor Taylor's conviction on the first two of the four questions which we are using as connecting-links in our critical discussion has appeared in the course of

154. Essays Catholic and Critical, pp. 80; 63. See above, p. 172.

155. See above, pp. 178ff.

156. See below, p. 224.

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154. Essays Catholic and Critical, pp. 80; 63. See above, p. 172.

155. See above, pp. 178ff.

156. See below, p. 224.



the preceding exposition; it may be briefly summarised here.

### a. Objectivity of Values.

a. Professor Taylor regards the relation of values to actuality as "the most important problem in the whole range of philosophy"<sup>157</sup>. At various points in his writings five independent but converging lines of reasoning in substantiation of the object<sup>five</sup> status of values in ultimate reality are advanced. They are:-

1. From an analysis of the meaning of the term 'value'. This is an argument from the invariable reference to objective reality in value-terms as we habitually employ them.

Whenever men use terms signifying value or worth, they always have reference to a concrete fact--to a particular thing or person or attitude or act--not to a value in the abstract. And they always assume the existence, either in fact or ex hypothesi, of that which is valued. Further, their ascription of value always implies a reference, more or less explicit, to personal activity as the originator and the appreciator of that which is valued. In sum, values 'intend' reference to objective reality, to existent reality, and to personal agency. (158)

2. From a more careful examination of the concept of 'truth' as a value. This may be regarded as an argument from logic.

We have just recognised that truth is one of the ultimate values. But any truth is a proposition; and a proposition must be an assertion about what is. Therefore, a value-statement which makes profession to be a true statement must be a statement about an existent. (159)

3. From a study of the way in which values actually make their appearance within human experience. This is an epistemological argument.

Actual life knows nothing of mere 'facts' or mere 'values', but only of 'facts revealing values'. What is actually presented to us in experience is 'a single most imperfectly discriminated whole'.

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157. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, p. 36.

158. Op. cit., pp. 37-47. See above, p. 184. Cp. also, comment on the closely parallel argument of Sorley, above, pp. 112ff.

159. Op. cit., pp. 48-55. See above, pp. 185; 84; 176.

from which the aspects of shape, of colour, of beauty, etc., are discriminated by the mind through analysis. In this respect, the knowledge of Nature and the knowledge of values stand on a par; there is no more valid reason to deny objectivity in one case than in the other. In neither type of knowledge does the mind read its own interpretations into the data presented to it; the proper function of the mind in knowledge is not creation, but discovery. And the energies of reflection should be devoted entirely to achieving a more complete and more discriminating understanding of the 'given' data of experience. (160)

4. From a study of the way in which values appear within the world-process, and of their relation to other features of that process. This is a cosmological-teleological argument.

Our world is most truly represented as a single complex pattern which is reproduced with varying degrees of fullness and distinctness in the various sub-patterns which constitute the different elements in human experience. This pattern of the one world embraces all the data available for reflection--ourselves and our values as well as the physical universe. Furthermore, this real world is 'a hierarchised, or many-levelled, whole'. As such it is 'necessarily a teleological world'. Certain of the sub-patterns known to us in experience mirror the richness of the whole more fully than others. And the sub-patterns which most adequately represent the pattern of the whole are our values. From this fact, two things follow:--values are organic to reality as a whole, as fully and indubitably objective as any feature of our experience; and, by virtue of their status as the highest level in the hierarchy of sub-patterns of reality, they constitute our most significant key to the whole. (161)

5. From a more detailed analysis of the implications of man's moral experience specifically. This is an extension of the Kantian argument.

Man's moral experience in every aspect points beyond itself to a supernatural objective reality as the ground of its sanction and to an eternal life as necessary for its fulfillment. The consciousness of moral obligation which universally characterises man's higher life cannot be accounted for unless

- 160. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, pp. 55-66; 356-377; Vol. II, pp. 220-237; "Knowing and Believing" in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1928-9, pp. 20ff. See, above, pp. 157-161; 185-6; 195-6; 205-6.  
161. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, pp. 356-377; Essays Catholic and Critical, pp. 46-59; "Theism" in H.E.R.E., Vol. 12, pp. 278-9. See above, pp. 166-7; 206-7.



we trace its origin to an objective ground of absolute value. Similarly, man's aspiration toward loftier attainment in response to the 'call' which the yet unattained makes to his deepest nature presupposes that that 'call' comes to him from a perfect reality. Again his sense of guilt when he plays the traitor to his highest values is the consciousness of the desertion of a personal and transcendent Guardian of those values. Finally, the longing for a truer and richer existence, the sense of transience and impermanence in this life, which mark the most mature and sensitive human spirits suggest that they have been already touched in their inmost depths by the reality of that for which they yearn. These various features of moral experience embody a two-fold assumption--they owe their existence to the impact of a transcendent ground of absolute and perfect value which has caused them; and they are justified in the expectation of an eternal continuance in which aspiration after the ideal may achieve its goal, the yet unattained be realised, and the deepest yearnings of the soul find their appointed home and their perfect companionship. (162)

Our comment upon this five-fold vindication of the objectivity of values has been made at the points in the discussion at which the arguments first appeared, and need not be repeated here. <sup>163</sup> There are one or two points at which we should feel the necessity of raising questions; but they <sup>are</sup> of secondary importance. Our final impression may paraphrase an estimate of Professor Taylor's in another connection by saying that, however qualified may be the adequacy of any one of the arguments to prove his case, 'the agreement of the five in their common suggestion <sup>164</sup> gives it a force which ought to be invincible' .

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162. Essays Catholic and Critical, pp. 59-70; The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, Chapters III-IX; "Theism" in H.E.R.E., Vol. 12, pp. 280-281. See also above, pp. 167-170; 188-199.

163. See above, pp. 112-118; 186-7; 199-208.

164. Cp. Essays Catholic and Critical, p. 80.

b. Values and  
Nature.

b. Professor Taylor's philosophy of Nature may be surmised from a comparison of three passages in the writings to which we have directed major attention--in the critique of the Kantian form of the teleological argument where it is hinted that that the evidence for God from Nature might be so rephrased as to elude Kant's strictures upon it <sup>165</sup>; in the essay in Essays Catholic and Critical where the promise of the encyclopedia article is partially redeemed <sup>166</sup>; and in the section of the Gifford Lectures to which special attention has already been invited where the conception of Nature sketched in the intermediate essay is amplified and greatly strengthened, and is woven into a comprehensive world-view in which values also find their proper place. <sup>167</sup> The arguments of the latter two of these three passages are essentially harmonious but the points of view from which they approach the problem are somewhat different.

The earlier and briefer statement is set against the historic background of the development of cosmological speculation through the centuries. Two observations urged the Greeks to posit a supernatural and ultimate ground of Nature:--

1. The fact that Nature is always dependent suggests the necessity of an unchanging and eternal source of all things mutable.
2. The fact of motion which characterises Nature suggests the necessity of an unmoving reality which is at once the source of motion and the assurance of stability.

Our own conception of the physical universe has greatly  
<sup>165.</sup> "Theism" in H.E.R.E., Vol. 12, pp. 273-9.  
<sup>166.</sup> Essays Catholic and Critical, pp. 46-59. See above, pp. 166f.  
<sup>167.</sup> The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, pp. 356-385.



changed in modern times, but we have not escaped fundamentally the same two speculative perplexities; and the soundest philosophy still points to a supernatural and ultimate reality behind Nature.

1. The order of Nature as we discover it is made possible by the interplay of two sets of factors which are themselves disparate and yet which occur in conjunction throughout Nature--unchanging 'law' and ever-changing 'brute stuff'. The interrelation of these two apparently ultimate factors and consequently, the existence of our world is explicable only on the assumption of a transcendent and supernatural ground of the two orders and of their relation.
2. Nature is characterised by incessant change but, in the larger view, it is not aimless change but change in a definite direction. There is discoverable a 'trend' toward the production of 'intelligence surpassing her own'. This 'orderliness and apparent purposive "trend toward intelligence" in Nature suggest that the omnipotent and eternal supernatural (already discovered) is a wholly intelligent Will'. (168)

In the later and longer statement these findings are not neglected but they are caught up into a very much larger and more massive interpretation.

It is not uncharacteristic of Professor Taylor that his most notable contribution to the philosophy of Nature and, in the present writer's opinion, one of the most brilliant and suggestive passages in his voluminous writings should occur in a discussion of "other-worldliness" and in the form of an almost incidental comment upon a remark of Professor Bosanquet. But these thirty pages are worthy of careful study. If our own concern were with restatements of the 'teleological argument' rather than the 'moral argument', we should give them a central place in our study. For they furnish, in our opinion, perhaps the most important  
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168, See above, pp. 166-7.

and promising of the 'new cosmologies'. And they may well lay claim to recognition as the most notable single section in the Gifford Lectures.

It is not easy to give an adequate impression of so massive a world-view in a few sentences. It may perhaps be identified as a form of the 'philosophy of organism' which has won contemporary currency through the influence of Professor Whitehead. Professor Taylor's recent reflection has evidently been much under the spell of Whitehead's thought. But his adaptation and amplification of Whitehead's basic position clearly surpasses it in comprehensiveness and grasp, and the brief section we are considering holds more promise for further development than does Process and Reality. The distinguishing features of Professor Taylor's position have been referred to in passing; they may again be summarised thus:-

The world is a single complex pattern made up of the most varied strands. These constitutive elements are themselves patterns reproducing in varying degrees of fullness and distinctness the characteristic pattern of the whole. Therefore, the whole is rightly spoken of as 'all-pervasive', but it is more clearly discernible in some of the sub-patterns than in others. The pattern of the whole embraces our own life and all that sustains it. Our task is to decipher the pattern of the whole, and our interpretation must therefore take into account morality, art and religion as much as the material of the physical and physiological sciences.

Moreover, this real world is a hierarchised or many-levelled whole. And as such it is necessarily a teleological world. While it lies beyond our human powers fully to discern the character of the all-embracing pattern, we may learn something of its nature by attention to the various types of sub-patterns available for our study. But it is obvious that the most important light will be found in the richest subpatterns, the highest structures known to us; these are intelligent

169. See frequent references to Prof. Whitehead in The Faith of a Moralist, espec. the 2nd vol. See also "Some Reflections on Process and Reality in Theology, 1929.



living creatures. The more rudimentary patterns can be rightly understood only by recognising them as subordinate elements in the richer and more concrete patterns. From this point of view, those patterns which are 'other-worldly' from any narrow and obvious interpretation of 'this world' are now seen to be the higher types of sub-patterns in terms of which alone the sub-patterns of 'this world' can be rightly understood. And, from a slightly different point of view, advance from one level of pattern to a higher is made possible by absorption into the lower of more of the higher or 'other-worldly' pattern.

But it is clear that, by this process of reasoning, we are pointed beyond merely biological patterns to artistic production, moral action and religious adoration as demanding final integration. These features belong to the one actual world in which life is lived and their specific patterns disclose features of the pattern of the whole. Indeed, since we have already determined that it is to the richest and fullest patterns of all that we must look for the least inadequate glimpses permitted to us of the pattern of the whole, we can have no question where that final light is to be sought. 'Values are the dominant features in the pattern of reality.'

If it were possible for us to see with complete clarity and certainty that the values which are fundamental for the spiritual life of man are also the dominant characters in the whole pattern of reality, we should be in present possession of the 'beatific vision' of God. Such vision may be regarded as the possession of those pilgrims who have reached the eternal haven intended for them. (170)

c. Moral and Other Values.	c. Professor Taylor has not given us his final thought on the relative significance of the different intrinsic values. In his earliest important work, he expressed preference for that usage of the term 'morality' which would bring all ultimate ends of desire within its scope, although he recognises that that is not the meaning which the word conveys in popular parlance.
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"Morality is sometimes understood as a comprehensive name for all the practical side of life, including every experience in which the presence of an ideal can be detected, and it is in the main in this

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170. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, pp. 356-375. As far as possible I have quoted the author's own words.

sense that we have spoken of morality in the course of the present Essay. In this comprehensive sense of 'morality', the endeavour towards complete scientific insight or perfect aesthetic expression is of course a subdivision of morals, and as such we have ourselves for the most part treated it....On the other hand, in common parlance a distinction would generally be drawn between 'morality' and the typically scientific or artistic activity." 171

It is not clear whether he still means to adhere to this employment of morality as inclusive of the other ultimate values. At least one passage in The Faith of a Moralist seems to carry on his earlier usage. Associating his own interpretation of values with that of Professor Laird, he says:-

"An artistic or scientific imperative, if it is really imperative at all, is itself a moral imperative. ....All imperatives are moral." 172

But his more usual use of the terms signifying the ultimate values would seem to imply his own acceptance of the more common terminology which his early thought had rather disdained as 'popular'. In the introductory discussion of the status of values within reality, he seeks to indicate the objective reference of the values of truth, of moral practice, and of art successively and independently.<sup>173</sup> And in the section to which repeated reference has been made above, he speaks of "morality, art, religion" as three independent and correlative forms of value which any adequate world-view must bring within its grasp.<sup>174</sup> Perhaps the most significant indication of his mind's discrimination of aesthetic from moral values is the fact that almost

invariably, in seeking for support for a point in the field  
171. The Problem of Conduct, p. 467.

172. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, p. 298.

173. Op.cit., pp. 39-46.

174. Op.cit., p. 361.



of morals, he turns to an illustration in art as though to an independent though parallel and complementary field of values. Save for the passage quoted above and one or two <sup>others</sup> apparently though less clearly in the same vein, one would arrive at the impression that Professor Taylor's theory of the relation between the values might not unfairly be summarised as follows:-

1. There are three types of ultimate value--those of truth, of goodness, and of beauty.
2. Religion has reference to value also, but requires to be classified in an independent category, not as a fourth correlative type, but rather either as the other values in a special reference or else as a quite separate and unique category of value.
3. The values of beauty as they find expression in art are as genuinely objective and perhaps as significant for our final philosophy as are distinctly moral values. (The instances in which the argument hinges on an illustration from aesthetic experience, most frequently in either music or the drama, are far too numerous to be cited.)
4. The argument (of the Gifford Lectures) has been built with moral values principally in view; but it would hold in its main features with equal validity in reference to the other types of intrinsic value.
5. In particular, the argument for the objectivity of values applies to them all equally.
6. Moral values are usually viewed in their distinction from values of truth and beauty; but occasionally they are instanced as representative of the intrinsic values in general and as embracing them.

Our final judgment is that the author's opinion in the matter is by no means clearly revealed nor is his practice uniform and consistent. It is one of the elements in his thought most standing in need of further elaboration and clarification. Like each of the other three writers of our study, his position would be greatly strengthened by a

more adequate philosophy of values. The general problem will demand fuller discussion when we meet it in the thought of Professor Baillie; our own comment on it may be reserved until that time.

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#### d. The Problem of Evil.

d. In the same way, Professor Taylor's more important writings contain no full discussion of the problem of evil. The awful reality of evil is fully recognised. Assent is given to the contention that, without the supporting considerations from moral experience, the evidences for God from Nature and history would hardly be sufficient to induce theistic conviction in the face of the evil features of the world and of human life. The issue is discussed from the point of view of the attitude with which the religious man will receive evil. He will find refuge neither in a theatrical defiance nor in a Stoic resignation; his response will rather be the willing acceptance of such adversities as life may lay upon him as 'God's messengers'.

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"I think we all know of a better way, which is followed in practice by thousands of humble souls under burdens more grievous than those which send the sentimentalists of literature to whining or cursing, according to temperament, and the literary Stoics to admiration of their own fortitude. It is possible to do better than to abstain from complaints or to cultivate pride; it is possible, and we all know of cases in which it is finely done, to make acceptance of the worst fortune has to bestow a means to the development of a sweetness, patience, and serene joyousness which are to be learned nowhere but in the school of sharp suffering." 177

So far and no farther The Faith of a Moralist carries us.

Professor Taylor's most adequate treatment of the question is to be found in a small pamphlet published in

175. See below, pp. 271ff. 176. "Theism," p. 279; The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, p. 34.

177. Op.cit., p. 154.



the series of "Affirmations" edited by Dr. Percy Dearmer.

The position there taken is, in substance, as follows:-

In the problem of evil we confront three quite distinct questions. The first asks what evil is; the second, how it comes to exist; the third, how an almighty and all-good God if he exists can tolerate evil. The first question is strictly philosophical, the second historical, the third specifically theological.

A survey of certain historic theories of evil will prepare us to consider the specifically Christian attitude toward the problem.

a. One familiar theory holds that there is no such thing as evil; the belief that evil exists is a pure illusion. This position is absurd, is self-refuting, and may be immediately dismissed.

b. The optimistic doctrine of the Stoics teaches that evil, while not a pure illusion, is only relative. What may be actually bad for one individual would be discovered, in the largest view, to be beneficial to mankind. This position outrages both our feelings and our intellects. It cannot be proven true. And, even if it could, the fact that the suffering of one person may bring indirect good to humanity does not diminish the reality of the evil in the case of the vicarious sufferer.

c. The evolutionary view of evil so prevalent in the Nineteenth Century suggests that evil of all kinds is merely failure to make the appropriate adjustment to the environment. Any such attitude simply fails to take the inner witness of the moral life seriously. For example, modern war is not to be explained merely as a reversion to savagery. It is something far more cruel, malign, reprehensible than any savage behavior could be, just by virtue of the fact that it occurs in a high state of civilisation. It suggests not that men are in danger of sinking back to the level of animals but that they are in danger of becoming devils.

d. In vivid contrast to the preceding theories is that shared by Christianity and all the most profound moral philosophers, notably Plato and Kant. It begins by recognising that evil is not of one kind but of several. Disease is a more serious form of evil than want, and sin than disease. The supreme and typical evil is the moral sickness of sin. And the reason for the unique heinousness of sin is just that it arises from the deliberate rebellion of a genuinely

free agent against the altogether good will of God. Therefore any adequate theory of evil must take its start from a two-fold recognition--the reality of human freedom, and the good purpose of God for the world.

We are now prepared to examine this last type of attitude toward evil in its specifically Christian form. To the philosophical question, what evil is, Christianity answers that the most serious form of evil is sin, the violation of the sovereign will of God by the free act of one of his creatures. To the historical question, how evil comes to exist, Christianity offers no answer, as indeed no satisfactory answer to this riddle is discoverable by man. To the religious question, how evil can be reconciled with the will of an almighty and all-good God, Christianity attempts only a partially satisfactory answer. The heart of that answer is that there is nothing in life, except our own perverse wills, which can prevent us from attaining the heights of moral manhood, and nothing which cannot be transmuted into a positive help toward that attainment. But this assertion is not demonstrable; it is a conviction of faith. And, in any event, its validity presupposes the assurance of immortality; for, if death ends all, then evil is finally triumphant and there is no solution of the 'problem of evil'. This assertion of conviction is Christianity's first reply to the religious question. But its final response is not to explain why evil should be and why it should be in the particular forms and occasions that it occurs; its final response is to give to souls who desire it the power to triumph over evil in their own experience. (179)

"The utmost that the theistic believer, or the Christian believer, is entitled by his faith to assert is that, in the attainment of the divine purpose, be it what it may, his own true good is not immorally sacrificed; the world which God has made is a world in which there is nothing, except our own morally evil will, which can prevent any of us from attaining 'the full stature of the perfect man', and nothing which may not be made into an actual help to the attainment of that stature. Even this, of course, is not demonstrable... It is an open possibility--on one condition. If it were, indeed, certain, or all but certain, that there is no continuation to our personal life on the other side of the grave, it might fairly be said that evil is in the end triumphant over good." 180

"What Christianity has professed to do and what we see that it has done in countless lives, as no other doctrine or faith has done, is not to explain evil but to enable us to triumph over it by converting the

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179. The Problem of Evil, passim. As far as convenient, I have retained the author's own words.

180. p.cit., p.26.



apparently most irreparable disasters of life into actual instruments towards the enriching of spiritual personality." 181

It will be seen, I think, that Professor Taylor's attitude toward evil has two facets. The first attempts an explanation, though admittedly an incomplete explanation, of what evil is and how it may be justified. The second confesses that no satisfactory explanation is possible and has recourse to an appeal to Christianity's practical transcendence of evil. Our reaction to these two contrasted treatments may be put in a phrase--the first, in Professor Taylor's hands, is thoroughly unsatisfying; the latter makes a moving and helpful appeal. In the first place the attempted 'explanation' does not grapple with those particular forms and instances of evil which constitute a 'problem' for sincere reflection. It seeks to focus the issue upon the single type of evil, human sin. Now, while sin is confessedly the most heinous form of evil in its moral consequences, it is also the form which furnishes the least difficulty to the perplexed mind of man. It should be obvious that, in a world in which free creatures are set at the endeavour after moral excellence, there must be the possibility of wilful misdoing by them, and of the long trains of sad consequences following therefrom. The types of evil which furnish the greatest perplexity for the earnest mind are two--those which are not due to man's wilful wrongdoing, i.e. natural evil, disease, etc.; and those of whatever origin which not even the power of Christian faith seems able to

181. Op.cit., p.29.

transmuté into positive good. Professor Taylor's discussion offers us no help at these points. In the second place, the attitude which is commended to us begs the crucial issue. It is maintained that there is nothing save our own morally evil wills which can prevent our attainment of perfect manhood, and nothing which may not become an actual help toward that high end. But this is the assertion of precisely the two matters which are most in question. Certainly there is nothing within the range of our experience to lend credence to the two statements in their absolute form. Thus it will be seen that, at every critical point, we are driven back upon the necessity of meeting the problem of evil with the defiance of faith.

Professor Taylor's handling of the question suggests to us that there are only two reasonable positions open to us in this troublesome question. One may seek to 'rationalise' evil, i.e. to cast all available light upon its sources, its inevitability and its specific incidences, justifying it to human reason as far as may be possible, though acknowledging at the end that the ablest explanation falls far short of satisfying every difficulty. If one choose this alternative, it is possible, in our judgment to present a far more adequate interpretation of evil than Professor Taylor has given us. Or, one may recognise at the outset that explanation fails precisely at the points where it is most needed and rest one's whole confidence in the transrational faith of religion. We shall have occasion to note a little later that there are profound paradoxes



at the very heart of the problem which strongly counsel  
 181.  
 recourse to this attitude toward it.

## IX.

ConcludingComment.

We come then at the close to suggest a final  
 estimate of Professor Taylor's thought.

We have offered not a little critical comment  
 182  
 in the course of the exposition. The most important of  
 those criticisms may be brought together in the form  
 of three constructive suggestions:-

1. Professor Taylor's theism would be greatly  
 strengthened by a clear deliniation of his theory of  
 knowledge. That there is a very definite epistemology  
 implicit in all of his later metaphysical writings, we  
 183  
 have more than once suggested . And if one were in-  
 clined to employ with regard to his thought the method  
 which he recommends as the appropriate one for meta-  
 physics in its approach to reality--the revealing of the  
 inherent logic of it--it would not be difficult to piece  
 together the author's fragmentary suggestions into a  
 coherent position. But Professor Taylor has not thus far  
 done so himself. It would result in a theory of knowledge  
 closely akin to that which was occupying the labours of  
 the late Baron Von Hugel at the end of his life and which  
 184  
 he had hoped to embody in his Gifford Lectures . It  
 would take the form of a religious realism. By an incisive  
 and untiring examination of the process by which all know-  
 ledge comes to us, it would demonstrate that in all our  
 181. See below, p. 375. 182. See above, pp. 177-83; 199-208; 221.  
 183. See above, pp. 157-162; 205; 209.  
 184. See The Reality of God, espec. Cht. 1, and unpublished  
 manuscript, Critical Realism in the Thought of Von Hugel.

knowing--knowledge of Nature as well as knowledge of values, and knowledge of values no less than knowledge of Nature--we are actually in living touch with the Supernatural, with God. And that progress in true knowledge consists of a progressive mastery of this ever mysterious, ever finally incomprehensible, impact of the divine spirit upon our lives.

2. Professor Taylor's theism would be further strengthened if it were placed at the center of a carefully developed comprehensive metaphysical view of reality as a whole. Here again he has not left us without clear indication of what the outcome would be. And we have ourselves made some attempt to deduce it from his incidental discussions of cosmology and to present its main outlines.<sup>185</sup> Our suggestion would involve taking the discussion of "Other-worldliness" to which we have repeatedly urged<sup>186</sup> attention, amplifying it and making it the setting for his more specific doctrine of God. In that event, the resulting theism would be what Professor Sorley refers to<sup>187</sup> as "an extension of the cosmological argument".

3. There are a number of other points on which Professor Taylor's thought stands badly in need of clarification and more precise definition. We have already noted two such sources of confusion for his readers:-

a. He does not clearly indicate his attitude toward the relations of the ultimate values and the character of the primacy to be attributed to moral values.

b. He does not make clear how far his moral argument for God is an appeal to religious faith, how far he means

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185. See above, pp. 206-7; 210; 212-5.

186. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. I, pp. 356-375, and op.cit.

187. Moral Values and the Idea of God, p. 348.



to rely upon metaphysical argument in substantiation of it.

To these may be added a certain confusion resulting from a varying classification of types of reality. His usual suggestion is that there are three great types of our experience of reality--experience of Nature, experience of values, and religious experience. There would therefore be three ways by which the Supernatural would be found to touch our lives. But on one occasion he tells us that God speaks to man through Nature, through the prophets and saints, and through his Son.<sup>188</sup> And the same uncertainty in terminology may be discovered at a number of other points.

But our final word must be one of profound appreciation. From the point of view of the concern which is motivating this study, Professor Taylor's theism is incomparably the most fruitful of those which are to come under our examination.

It has been said, with some measure of exaggeration, that in matters of philosophy all differences are traceable to differences in point of view--those elements within experience which are selected for attention and the perspective from which attention is to be directed to them. This remark points to the nub of Professor Taylor's importance; it is in the fundamental perspective from which every aspect of the problem of God is approached. It is the initial assumption of that perspective that in man's every contact with reality, whether with Nature through sense-ex-

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188. The Faith of a Moralist, Vol. II, p. 235.

perience or with beauty through appreciation or with  
 a divine Comforter through personal communion, he is  
 in immediate contact with the Supernatural, with the  
 living and active God. To put the matter more accurately,  
 it is assumed that man's awareness of reality and his  
 desire to comprehend it is interpretable only as his response  
 to the prior movement of the living divine spirit upon him.  
 So to conceive the setting of man's relation to reality is  
 radically to reconstruct our conception of the process of  
 knowledge, of the function and scope of metaphysics, and  
 of the status of religion. Our whole outlook alters. We  
 immediately become aware that the first datum of all reflec-  
 tion as it is assuredly the first fact of all experience is  
 the indubitable existence of that most certainly real, most  
 incomprehensibly mysterious, most persistently alluring  
 Reality which is the prius of all knowledge as of all human  
 existence. The achievement of knowledge becomes the pains-  
 taking, ever baffled but ever persistent, ever incomplete  
 but ever more nearly complete, <sup>(effort)</sup> to discern and define the  
 features of that Reality. The business of metaphysical  
 speculation is no longer the attempt to construct a system  
 or to unify the various sciences but "the necessarily im-  
 perfect and tentative reconciliation of the exigences of  
 scientific thinking with the imperative moral and religious  
 demands of life"<sup>189</sup>. And religion, as the experience of the  
 soul's conscious communion with the ultimate Reality, far  
 from being a dubious matter recognised if at all only by  
 ----  
 189. Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 272.



leave of the special sciences--at best an 'elective in the university of life'-- becomes at once life's primal and final interest since it has to do with life's initial and life's ultimate relationship.

The meaning of all this for the problem we set ourselves at the outset of this enquiry will be at once apparent. If theism is to find a way out of the sterile and inadequate forms in which recent liberal theology has cast it, it will be along the pathway marked for us by Professor Taylor's approach. The first step must be a recovery of the recognition of the priority of God in experience.

"We have urged that the heart of the weakness of contemporary theism is in the methodical inductive logic which it has increasingly accepted as its own. In another word, it is in its 'point of view'." It puts the cart before the horse." It should be clear that if there is a God at all, he must be not only the primal fact in the universe, but the prior reality in all our experience. And vital religion is on the right track in attributing to him the initiative in our supremely significant experiences. God cannot be achieved as the last term of an arduous intellectual inquiry. He must be recognised as present all along--in the world which gives us birth, in our knowing of that world, and especially in those rich and deep insights into reality which furnish some foretaste of what it lies within our life to become. If he is at all, he is 'closer than breathing nearer than hands and feet'--one without whose prior love we should never have known what it means to love. And he -----  
190. See above, p.7.

may be so discovered, as the implicate of our undeniably real experience. Then he is no longer a guest whom we consent to admit into our world of thought, rather tentatively and after severe scrutiny. He is the source of the life of which we ourselves partake, through whose courtesy we are admitted into the knowledge of himself and of our world and of all things worth knowing. That is the truly religious attitude. Only in that attitude can God be made sure.



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CHAPTER SIXTHE MORAL ARGUMENT OF JOHN BAILLIEProfessor  
Baillie's  
Place.

Of the restatements of the moral argument which we are to consider, that which most closely follows the orthodox Kantian pattern is the theism of Professor John Baillie, professor of systematic theology in Union Theological Seminary, New York. I do not<sup>1</sup> think Professor Baillie would welcome such an identification of his position. He would be inclined to insist that his thought was merely faithful to the great "catholic Christian tradition", rather than to any philosophical or theological school. And his writings do make frequent appeal for substantiation to the thought of the Gospels and the early church. But as an apologetic, an intellectual defense of religious faith, the dependence upon Kant is too manifest to be denied. Indeed, in his most important work, The Interpretation of Religion, Professor Baillie repeatedly defines his own position as a lineal development of "a characteristically modern insight" which had "its first fully argued expression in the Critical Philosophy of Kant"<sup>2</sup>. A recent American analyst of contemporary theological tendencies is quite right in listing Professor Baillie's book with that of his brother<sup>3</sup> and Professor Taylor's<sup>4</sup> The Faith of a Moralist, but in advance of the other two, as the most important Kantian statements of the past decade.

<sup>1</sup> From remarks made in personal conversation.  
<sup>2</sup> The Interpretation of Religion, p. 260. Cp., p. 299, etc.

<sup>3</sup> D. M. Baillie, Faith in God.

<sup>4</sup> Professor Harris M. Hall, in Religion and Life, Winter, 1932.

In any event it stands clearly distinguished from the other positions of our study. And the differentiation may be put in a single sentence. Professor Baillie does not argue for the validity of the Christian belief in God; he describes what that belief is. He does not tell why Christians have a right to believe, but only what they believe and why. The appeal, not merely in the final estimate but at every important point in the discussion, is not to argument or proof or reasoned conviction, but to faith. We have already given this as the distinctive mark of a genuine Kantian<sup>5</sup> statement.

Professor Baillie's thought traces a single consistent course in all his writings; one meets essentially the same argument in each of his published works. Its most complete and adequate expression is to be found in The Interpretation of Religion.<sup>6</sup> It is sketched in the more popular little book which was published while the larger work was in preparation, The Roots of Religion in the Human Soul.<sup>7</sup> Its presuppositions are given in unusually clear and persuasive outline in his inaugural address as professor in Union Seminary under the title, "The Logic of Religion".<sup>8</sup> His latest book, although preoccupied with christological rather than strictly theological matters, moves forward from the same premisses and may be regarded as fully of a piece with its predecessors.<sup>9</sup> Professor Baillie himself has pointed to his brother's book, Faith in God, for a less faulty exposition of his own convictions.<sup>10</sup>

We shall be primarily occupied with the large,  
 5. See above, p. 78. 6. New York, 1928.  
 7. London, 1926. 10. Edinburgh, 1927.  
 8. Published in the Union Theological Seminary Alumni Bulletin, October, 1930.  
 9. The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity, N.Y., 1928.



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systematic work, The Interpretation of Religion. But only with those portions of it which are directly relevant to our problem. In this essay we can do much less than justice to a truly great piece of systematic theological exposition. And if our comments must be largely in the vein of dissent, it is not from want of appreciation for the power and analytic skill of the author's mind. For this book, in our judgment, should take rank with Dr. Tennant's Philosophical Theology and Dr. Oman's <sup>The</sup> Natural and the Supernatural and Grace and Personality as among the most important theological works of the present period.

## II.

### The Position in Summary.

**Presuppositions.** Of first importance for an understanding of Dr. Baillie is a clear grasp of his view of the scope and task of apologetic. This is the point d'appui of all he has to say. It is reiterated with almost wearisome insistence in each of his writings. It is the conviction which we have already noted as marking him off most clearly from other writers. "The task of theology is to bring to light the inner logic of religious faith." <sup>11</sup> "Its duty is to exhibit, with the sharpest possible detail and under the greatest possible degree of magnification, the nature of the passage which religion makes from value to reality, from a moral obligation to a moral cosmos" <sup>12</sup> Or, more simply put, "it should consist simply in the attempt to bring to clear consciousness, and to express in precise language, the nature of the compulsion which in every age has led earnest seekers after righteousness to trust in an

11. "The Logic of Religion", p. 6.

12. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 351.



Eternal Righteousness, and has inspired devoted workers to<sup>13</sup> believe that they are working for a more-than-human Cause! And again, "The task of theological science is not to construct a system of dogmas, but"--in a phrase which echoes like a refrain and voices the author's feeling in the matter more graphically than any other-- "to lay bare the nerve<sup>14</sup> of this thing which men call faith"<sup>14</sup>. So to define the function of apologetic is to view it as a science, for "the essential aim of science may be said to be correct definition or description"<sup>15</sup>. But it is a science of the type which the Germans call Geisteswissenschaften, a science of spirit, a science which interprets its material not by description and analysis from without but rather through<sup>16</sup> sympathetic understanding from within.

Such a reading of the aim of theology rests on a number of assumptions. Two in particular are stressed by the writer:-- "first that religion does possess an inner<sup>17</sup> logic", "ultimate interior principles which inspire and regulate religious faith, the true fountain and source of religious belief"<sup>18</sup>; and, "second that the processes of this logic are not fully patent to the consciousness of the religious subject as such"<sup>19</sup>. To these we may perhaps add a third assumption, concerning the priority of religious experience to articulate religious belief, and the type of qualification needful in one who would advance from faith to an understanding of its interior logic:-

- 13. The Roots of Religion in the Human Soul, p.233.  
 14. The Interpretation of Religion, p.16.  
 15. Op.cit., p.11.                      16. Op.cit., p.5.  
 17. "The Logic of Religion", p.6.  
 18. The Interpretation of Religion, p.16.  
 19. "The Logic of Religion", p.6.

" The process of reasoning by which faith rises to the thought of God, which is the same as to say the path which leads from our values to reality, is so simple and direct that no man has ever been prevented from finding it by slowness of wits or deficiency of logical power, but rather by too much logic of a false and abstract kind or else by something lacking from his living experience. Intuitive insight will here always precede formal proof, and where there is as yet no such insight, formal proof is likely to be powerless to convince. In a word, everything depends, not upon the rigour of our logic, but upon the depth and the vigour and the richness of our practical acquaintance with the realities from which our logic starts." 20

Here is suggested the final assumption--what apologetic may and may not be expected to accomplish. In no case can it be expected to bring to birth belief or faith where they are not already firmly rooted. Its function is clear and definitely delimited; it can make plain to faith the nature of the assurance which faith already possesses and, in so doing, have some weight in silencing false theologies.

In summary, then:--

The task of theology is to reveal to the religious consciousness the innate convictions and grounds of conviction which are implicit in the experience of faith itself. It will add no new or supporting considerations to the certainty which the religious mind already possesses. Nor will it bring the tiniest ray of suggestion or conviction to a mind where they are not already present. It may give to the already believing soul a heightened sense of assurance--a bolder face against the derision of a sceptical theology, science or philosophy--by laying bare a certainty which it already possesses but of which it may not be fully aware. <sup>21</sup> Dr. Baillie summarises the matter in these

20. The Roots of Religion p. 231.

21. I assume that this is a fair rendering of what theology is expected to accomplish, although there are passages which seem to question its competence for this task.



words, "Faith itself may do battle with nature, but only<sup>22</sup> scientific theology can do battle with naturalism."

But it would, I think, be a truer rendering of the heart of his meaning if the order of phrases were reversed:-  
 "Scientific theology may do battle with naturalism, but only faith itself can do battle with nature."

With so much understanding of its presuppositions, we are now ready to follow the development of Dr. Baillie's thought in outline.

#### Outline of the Argument.

Our purpose is to understand religion. Our tool is the science of theology. Our method--the only proper method for theology--is to ask the religious consciousness what it finds religion really to be; what it experiences, what it believes, what it knows. For a true interpretation of religion is possible only for one who stands fully within the experiences he seeks to interpret. Such a science of religion is, within the limits of its subject-matter, completely autonomous and authoritative. Neither science nor philosophy can discredit or confirm its certainties. It may pass on its findings to metaphysics for incorporation in a larger synthetic view. But they must be incorporated unmodified and uncriticised; metaphysics can offer no opinion whatever on the validity of theology's convictions. Our attention will be given not to the religion of our own age or sect, or of Protestantism, or even of Christianity in distinction from other types of world-religion; but to 'religion itself, in its most

<sup>23</sup>  
 universal and deepest significance', 'our whole human  
 22. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 25

23. W. R. Inge, Outspoken Essays, first series, p. 229.

insight into the Eternal World'. And we shall attach no importance to evidence for the truth of religion's certainties drawn from outside the religious consciousness itself, e.g. by one of the traditional theistic proofs. For these seldom point beyond a designing Mind or Ultimate Reality behind our phenomenal world; even if they prove the existence of God they do not establish his goodness. Further we shall aim to incorporate significant data from religion's historic development and from psychological analyses of its phenomena, but without conceding the essential independence or unique importance of the History of Religions or the Psychology of Religion. (Part I).

The initial item in our constructive task is to bring clearly before us the actual characteristics of the religious consciousness, the phenomenon of faith. This can be done most helpfully by facing examples of religious faith where it stands in boldest contrast to the 'natural' reaction to circumstance. Two instances will suffice. The first is the predicament of Job; life badgered by cruel and unmerited misfortune; beliefs challenged by the problem of evil. The other is the dilemma of Amiel; the mind convinced by a naturalistic science; belief made unreasonable by accredited scientific findings. In each case the natural response would be the surrender of belief. In each case the actual response is a defiance of external evidence, a sense of trust which finds expression in the one case as 'Though he slay me, yet will



I trust him', in the other case as 'Yes, but the heart has reasons of which the mind may never know'. How shall we account for this paradox? Two quite inadequate explanations may be summarily dismissed. Faith's response cannot be interpreted as 'wishful-thinking' since all too frequently faith stands under the necessity of believing not what it wants to be true but what it feels must be true. And faith's response cannot be attributed to ingrained religious tradition since faith's own self-consciousness denies such a dependence and also since this interpretation merely pushes into the past the explanation of the initial rise of faith's distinctive attitude. Accordingly we must turn to more promising explanations of the phenomenon of faith. By examining three such theories which we must reject, we can make our way toward a fourth which we can accept. (Part II, Chapter I).

1. There are those who would account for religion's distinctive attitude as an instance of insight, analogous to but more diffuse and popular than, the insight of science or metaphysics. There is only one possible path to the knowledge religion desires--systematic observation of facts and generalization based upon deduction from these facts. This is the Rationalistic theory of religion. There are important elements of truth in this view:-- Religion is the mother of speculative philosophy, as it is of medicine, politics, law, art, etc.; and both religion and speculative philosophy aim to give knowledge of

ultimate reality. But there are more weighty considerations which preclude the acceptance of this identification of religion and philosophy:--while religion and metaphysics share much common ground, there are interests of each to which the other is indifferent; while each attempts a world-view, there are only certain types of world-views which would be permissible for religion; further while metaphysics presupposes learning and intellectual training, religion is an affair of the untutored; finally religion is characteristically more practical in its reference than is philosophy, and at its heart carries a sense of obligation which metaphysics feels no necessity to acknowledge. Rationalistic theories are at one in regarding religion as an inferior kind of knowledge whether their stress falls upon primitive cosmologies or the phenomena of animism or, as in the case of Hegel, upon an a priori dialectic which views philosophy as religion come to maturity. In any case the rebuttal is the same--the progress of religion away from primitive concepts has paralleled that of science and metaphysics; and by no reading of the facts can religion be interpreted as a species of speculation. (Part II, Chapter II).

2. At the opposite pole yet not without its points of affinity is the Romanticist theory of religion. Its claim is that religion characteristically takes its rise in feeling, an element in the mental life prior to knowledge or will. But this position is untenable both psychologically and religiously. It is inadequate psychologically since there is no such thing as significant feeling



without prior sensations, perceptions and ideas. It is inadequate religiously because 'feeling' is too vague a locus for so definite a content as that of mature religion; and because 'feeling' is too subjective a locus for an activity which means to be objectively true. Objections of a similar kind may be urged against three variations of the Romanticist theory--that prevalent in schools of the psychology of religion; that which locates religion in a special 'religious sense'; and that whose appeal is to 'religious experience.' There is no special 'spiritual sense' discoverable; and there is no 'religious experience' save in conjunction with religious faith, i.e. in conjunction with definite religious belief. (Part II, Chapter III).

3. Another school of thought would show religious faith as a distinctive type of insight or intuition, springing from a distinctive religious a priori. These a priori categories are held to be analogous to but completely independent of the a priori categories of the theoretical reason which guide science and the a priori categories of the practical reason which determine morality. The two most important exponents of this theory were Troeltsch and Otto. It may be called Theological Intuitionism. Against all views of this kind, two devastating criticisms should be brought. What is this 'religious a priori'? Unlike the a priori categories of theoretical reason and practical morality, it forever eludes precise definition. Secondly, it is impossible to go behind or

below a form of religion which is ethically germinated; the religious consciousness takes its birth from the ethical consciousness and the specifically religious or 'numinous' element appears when our respect for the good coalesces with our awe before the power which controls our fate. The character of the specific 'religious emotion' is not 'awe' but rather 'reverence'. (Part II, Chapter IV).

4. There is a fourth theory of religion which finds it rooted not in speculation nor in subreflective feeling nor in some unique intuition of truth, but in the moral consciousness--in our apprehension of values, in the sense of duty, in the categorical moral imperative. With this line of thought are to be linked the names of Kant, Fichte, Lotze, Ritschl and Herrmann. And it is to this interpretation of religion that our own allegiance must be given. With the reflections of these great writers as our stimulus, we are now prepared to suggest a definition of religion and from that definition to proceed to a fuller examination of its meaning and its validity. (Part II, Chapter V).

Our basic conviction is that there is "an organic and all-determinative relationship between religion and morality"<sup>24</sup>. Like morality, religious belief is always relevant to the practical concerns of life and it is always accompanied by a sense of urgency, even of obligatoriness. The distinction is that while morality is con-



cerned with values,"the essential concern of religion is not simply with value but with the relation of value to reality."<sup>25</sup> Thus religion may be defined as "an apprehension of reality through, and in terms of, our moral values"<sup>26</sup> or, more simply, as "a moral trust in reality"<sup>27</sup>. Objection to this definition may be brought from either of two opposed perspectives--on the ground that religion should not be so closely identified with morality, or on the ground that religion is merely 'morality touched with emotion' and presupposes no necessary connection of morality with reality. The first objection, in turn, may be urged on either of two quite different grounds. It is claimed that the identification of religion with morality impoverishes the religious consciousness by neglecting the approach to religion from other types of value, notably beauty; but this objection springs from a too narrow view of morality which <sup>m</sup>embraces all ultimate values and is indeed "but the art of living"<sup>28</sup>. It is claimed on the other hand that the identification of religion with morality is invalidated by the facts of primitive religion which show religion to be premoral in its earliest forms; but this objection springs from a sophisticated reading of primitive life since even primitive religion reveals an affinity with correspondingly primitive morality. The second and contrary main objection--that religion presupposes no necessary connection of morality with reality--also rises from two quarters. It is held

25. The Interpretation of Religion, p.317.

26. Op.cit., p.318.

27. Op.cit., p.318.

28. op.cit., p.304.

that primitive religion shows no concern of religion for the nature of reality; but, as in the other instance, this objection springs from a too sophisticated view of primitive life, since even primitive religion tries to relate its values to what is for it the ultimate reality. On the other hand, it is held that religion should be severely limited to faith in the validity of our values but should not seek to tie those values to a reality which is in fact indifferent or hostile to them; but such an attitude is not what men mean by religion. (Part II, Chapter VI).

Our view-point can be further elucidated by replies to a series of questions:--

What is it that religion affirms of reality?

Religion affirms that "the inner core of reality must  
 be continuous with the moral consciousness" <sup>29</sup>; and that, consequently, "the highest ends which our conscience sets before itself are....our surest available clues  
 to the nature of the world's own final end" <sup>30</sup> .

What gift does religion make to life? It brings 'salvation', i.e. release from spiritual homelessness and isolation as well as from sin.

"It is this outlook and attitude which are the essence of religion. Its great and abiding superiority over any merely moral or social or humanistic outlook lies in the sense it gives us of being at home in the Universe. To the man in whose heart there is any germ or grain, even as a mustard-seed, of religious faith, the Universe is, at the heart of it, no bleak and foreign wilderness in which he, with his ideals of righteousness and love and faithfulness, is a forlorn and unheeded stranger. Still less is it an angry sea, ready to devour him and to swallow up for



ever all that he holds dear. Rather does it seem to him as his father's house; and he feels, as St. Paul long ago felt, that he is no longer a slave in it, but a son; and if a son, then an heir." 31

Whence comes the conviction that lies at the very center of all religion--the conviction that reality is on the side of goodness? In other words, how does faith in God come to birth in the soul of man? Its starting-point as we have repeatedly noted is in our awareness of human values, in our moral consciousness as such. Further it is of the first importance to recall that the imperative claims of duty are absolute and absolutely autonomous, in no sense dependent upon support in the nature of reality; "right is right, though the heavens fall." 32

Starting from this initial and underivable recognition of duty, the moral consciousness passes, often by wholly imperceptible and unanalysable stages, to the further conviction of a Divine Reality. It is exceedingly difficult to give any adequate psychological account of this transition from the conviction of duty to the certainty of duty's transcendent sanction. But it seems to lie in an implicit recognition that the claims of duty are absolute and, because, absolute, derived from the Absolute. If it be contended that this argument falls short of rigid logical demonstration, it must be replied that it is the only appropriate apologetic for religion, one which merely aims to reveal as clearly as possible faith's own implicit logic. For, as we noted earlier, the duty of theological science is "to exhibit, with the ---The Roots of Religion, p. 112.

31: The Interpretation of Religion, p. 343.

sharpest possible detail and under the greatest possible degree of magnification, the nature of the passage which religion makes from value to reality, from a moral obligation to a moral cosmos"<sup>33</sup>. The only possible escape from the power of this argument would seem to be through a denial of the absoluteness of our values.

"Under the long tuition of moral experience, the consciousness of the moral claim comes, by an almost imperceptible transition of thought, to be interpreted as an awareness of a Divine Reality. The process is not really a passage from believing in duty to believing in something else but is much rather a passage from one way of reading the meaning of duty to another way of reading it. For what religion does is just to give a deeper meaning to duty, a deeper significance to our values." 34

"Religion is, essentially, a product of our consciousness of value: it is an outlook on things which arises, characteristically, in the doing of one's duty--which grows up in the hearts of those who love whatsoever things are true and honest and just and pure and lovely and of good report and who, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things and do them. Yet religion is more than the consciousness of value and more than the love of goodness. It has to do, rather, with the relation of value to reality, with what Socrates and Plato long ago called 'the identity of goodness and being'.... All the religion that is in the world today has its ultimate root and ground in this one irresistible conviction which comes to upward-striving mortals, that in such values as those of love and honour and purity and living for others they are striking the rock-bottom of reality and are lighting upon the real key to the meaning and purpose of life--of the Cosmic Order as a whole and of their place in it." 35

"Faith's natural understanding of absolute obligation as an obligation deriving from the Absolute... may be set out in logical form somewhat as follows. The major premise is that an unconditional obligation can only mean an obligation laid upon one by the ultimate system of things in which one has one's part to play. The minor premise is my sure knowledge that an unconditional obligation is laid upon me to seek after that which is good. And the conclusion is that the universal system in which I find myself involved must therefore be of such a nature as to demand this good-

33. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 351.

34. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 348.

35. The Roots of Religion, p. 119ff.



ness of me." 36

But the question may be asked, How important and valuable is argument in the field of religion? Its chief usefulness will be negative, in clearing away artificial hindrances to belief; it will hardly bring faith in God to birth in a man's soul. For the major premise of faith's logic is a value-judgment, and here it is intuition not argument which persuades. And the precondition for such insight is not learning or intellectual acumen, but purity of heart, a whole-hearted self-surrender to our values.

"If we are right in believing that it is out of our consciousness of value that religious belief arises, then every proper and valid argument for religious belief must have as its major premise the awareness of some moral value. It must always be an argument from the beauty and the claim of goodness to the reality of Eternal Goodness, and from the loveliness of love to the Love of God." 37

"Argument is therefore here at this far-reaching disadvantage, that it carries conviction only in proportion to the depth of each man's moral consciousness, and that in that same proportion it is likely to have been already anticipated by the swifter processes of the intuitive understanding." 38

"The assurance of the Divine Companionship has in every age been promised not alone to the learned thinker, nor to him in any wise pre-eminently, but to all those who have sought it with a true and humble heart.... Not good deeds are here required; but a humble, childlike, patient, aspiring heart. In a word, the graces of character in which faith takes its rise are graces not of satisfied achievement but rather of receptiveness; and faith, when it comes, comes not as a thing accomplished but as a thing found--not as a meritorious performance on our part but as a gift on God's part." 39

Thus faith stands contrasted to scientific knowledge in

36. "The Logic of Religion", p. 11.

37. The Roots of Religion, p. 230.

38. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 362.

39. Op. cit., pp. 365; 368.

that the latter interprets reality as a system of causes and effects, but the former as guided by a purpose for good. Each gives certainty of a kind; but the certainty of science is one of intellect while the certainty of religion is made secure to the personality as a whole. (Part II, Chapters VI and VII).

Our study of values has led inevitably to the fact of God. And the God to whom we have been led is primarily one who conserves what is valuable. Such a God must be <sup>40</sup> personal, for "only personality can appreciate character". Indeed the progress of religion has been in the direction of a more living, approachable, intimately knowable God. To the worshipper God is "both another and greater Person and in some sense also the Eternal Spirit that moves, in scant or in satisfying measure, in his own heart" <sup>41</sup>. These two invariable elements in the fullest conception of God are represented in its early history by Animism and Mana respectively, and in theological thought by the attributes of transcendence and immanence. Both elements are required. (Part II, Chapter VIII).

Our study has also supplied us with criteria for judging differing religious systems and for testing genuine religious progress. That religion is the higher which embodies the higher ethical values. And progress within any religion will follow closely upon advancing moral values. These criteria are justified by a survey of the religious history of mankind and, especially, of

40. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 391.

41. Op.cit., p. 393.



progress in the conception of God among the Hebrews. Applying these criteria we have no difficulty in reaching the conclusion that it is in Jesus of Nazareth that both religion and the conception of God reach their culmination. (Part II, Chapter IX).

Finally we must note that the progress in man's discovery of spiritual truth is but one side of a relationship which has as its obverse the divine activity in revelation. While God's self-disclosure must be recognised in all our knowledge, yet it is most significant in what we call specifically religious knowledge. The revelation of God is progressively recognised in the inward rather than the outward, and in the normal rather than the abnormal. Accordingly it is in man--in man at his manliest and best--that God reveals himself most fully. It is in man as a locus of values which themselves belong to a higher world.

"What we call our values are really the self-disclosures and beckonings of a transcendent order. What we call our consciousness of moral obligation is really a consciousness of One who is actively striving to make Himself known to us and to win us for Himself." 42

And the culmination of that process of self-disclosure is to be discovered in the personality and the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, for, 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us  
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by a Son' . (Part II, Chapter X).

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42. "The Logic of Religion", p.14.

43. Hebrews 1:1-2, quoted in The Interpretation of Religion,  
p. 466.

## III.

Prof. Baillie  
and Kant.

In so lengthy and general an outline it is only too easy to lose hold of the heart of the matter. Before advancing further it is of first importance to grasp clearly the precise nature of Professor Baillie's reasoning from moral experience to God. We can come at this understanding most readily by marking the contrasts which he himself suggests between his thought and that of Kant.

In commenting upon Kant's statement of the moral argument, Professor Baillie had suggested two serious limitations in it.<sup>44</sup> In the first place, Kant's "reading of religion is too 'moralistic' in the bad and narrow sense of that word"<sup>45</sup>; he was not mistaken in linking faith to morality but rather in the inadequate interpretation of morality from which he finds faith to spring. In the second place, Kant's analysis is inadequate in "its account of the exact nature of the transition from the moral to the religious outlook"<sup>46</sup>. Professor Baillie proposes to make good the first shortcoming by a broader and more catholic view of morality as "the quest of the highest and most inclusive ideal which it is possible for man to seek after"<sup>47</sup> --with what qualified success we must note a little later.<sup>48</sup>

It is in his desire to improve on Kant's formulation in the second regard that we meet the very core of his own argument. It seems obvious, he says, that if the doctrine of

44. Prof. Baillie lists three criticisms; but it is difficult to discover any significant distinction between the first and the third. Their differentiation is due to faulty analysis.

45. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 274. 46. Op.cit., p. 275.

47. Op.cit., p. 274.

48. See below, pp. 274 ff.



the summum bonum be granted, the existence of God and the assurance of immortality follow logically and inevitably. The crux of the problem is not, as Kant thought, to establish this sequence but the prior difficulty of providing logical proof of the doctrine of the summum bonum itself.

"Has Kant ever really offered any demonstration that our recognition of duty's claims upon us carries with it the belief that the universe, as moral environment, must be no less ethically constituted than ourselves as moral agents?" 49

Release from Kant's difficulty is clearly<sup>1</sup> open to us along these lines:-

"Surely Kant makes the passage from morality to religion not when he deduces the existence of God from belief in the objective vindication of goodness but much rather when he passes to the belief in the objective vindication of goodness from the attitude of mere unquestioning obedience.... It is for this reason that the question of the exact nature of the transition from the moral to the religious consciousness has proved.... a fruitful ground for further investigation and discussion." 50

We may thus fix our eye on the crucial question--the objective vindication of goodness. How does Professor Baillie propose so to restate the Kantian position as to strengthen it at this critical point?

The briefest and clearest putting of his argument is in his inaugural lecture where it is stated in this simple logical form:-

"The major premise is that an unconditional obligation can only mean an obligation laid upon one by the ultimate system of things in which one has one's part to play. The minor premise is my sure knowledge that an unconditional obligation is laid upon me to seek after that which is good. And the conclusion is that the universal system in which I find myself involved must therefore be of such a nature as to demand this goodness of me." 51

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49. Op.cit., p.275.

50. Op.cit., p.275-6.

51. "The Logic of Religion", p.11.

In The Interpretation of Religion, the order of the premises is reversed:-

"The major premise from which the logic of faith proceeds is not only a value-judgment but the value-judgment par excellence--the consciousness of duty's claim upon our wills, the awareness of a distinction between a higher way that must be followed and a lower way that must be eschewed." 52

The syllogism is not completed; but we may assume that the minor premise would propose that our consciousness of duty is of such a character as to involve an absolute obligation, and that an absolute obligation can proceed only from an absolute and transcendent Being; therefore such a Being must exist.

We may be permitted to restate the argument in somewhat less rigorously logical form in the following propositions:-

1. The consciousness of moral obligation is an ultimate and underivable fact of human experience, intuitively apprehended.
2. The obligation which conscience recognises is an absolute one.
3. "No obligation can be absolute which does not derive from the Absolute." 53
4. Therefore, the Absolute must exist, and must be of such a character as to be the author of the consciousness of duty, i.e., "One Who loves the Good". 54

This, then, is the core of Professor Baillie's position, upon the validity of which his argument stands or falls. It will be seen that its adequacy might be questioned at any of three points:-

- a. Is the consciousness of moral obligation objectively grounded?
- b. Even if objective, is it necessarily absolute?

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52. The Interpretation of Religion p. 361.

53. Op.cit., p. 350.

54. Op.cit., p. 352.



c. Even if 'absolute', does that fact necessarily prove the existence of God?

a) As in the cases of the other reformulations of Kant's position which we are considering, the weight of the case is squarely placed in the first instance on the genuine objectivity of the moral judgment. Unlike them, no elaborate defence of this conviction is offered. Indeed, strange as it may appear, the larger and systematic work offers no direct evidence for the objectivity of goodness at all. One would suppose that it, like the fact of moral obligation, is regarded as self-evident. In the inaugural address it is pointed out that those who profess doubt of the objective grounding of morality are none the less quite convinced of the truth of our moral judgments; but their truth implies their objectivity.

"In the end there is no way to be sceptical about the objectivity of the moral consciousness except by denying the truth of its utterances. And that, as I have said, I can find no one ready to do." 55

b) Fuller attention is given to the absoluteness of the moral imperative. But here again the final appeal seems to be to a self-evident fact, intuitively grasped. "Nothing could be clearer than that the terms in which duty asserts its claim are terms of a quite absolute, and not merely a relative and partial, obligation." 56 It is recognised that this is the key-stone of the arch:-

"The argument, for all its simplicity, is nevertheless as inescapable as any argument in the sphere of values can ever be. The only possible escape from it is to deny the presence of absolute values in our experience, or, as Kant preferred to put it, the unconditional nature of the obligation with which our duty presents

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55. "The Logic of Religion", p.8.

56. The Interpretation of Religion, p.350.

itself to our wills." 57

c) For the inference from the absolute character of duty's claims to their source in an Absolute Being, a somewhat more detailed argument is presented. It is pointed out that an absolute obligation cannot arise from society since the standards<sup>d</sup> of society must find their sanction in some more ultimate reality of which society is only a fragment; and such an explanation would only press one step farther back the problem of origins, forcing the query of how the consciousness of absolute values came to arise within society unless from a transcendent source.<sup>58</sup> Equally unsatisfactory are those more sophisticated interpretations which try to ground moral values in a "realm of essence" which is distinguished from and antagonistic to the "realm of existence"; it is clear, as any true reading of Platonic doctrine would remind us, that the two realms interpenetrate and are aspects of a single ultimate reality.<sup>59</sup> But, as before, the finally convincing evidence proceeds from the inner consciousness of conscience itself.

"And so we come to see that what the voice of conscience actually does say is something more like this: 'The very heart and nature of things, the most ultimate reality that there is, demands that I be pure and true and tender and brave' No obligation can be absolute which does not derive from the Absolute." 60

It does not fall within our purpose to examine the adequacy of this chain of argument;<sup>[now]</sup> we shall have something to say on that point below.<sup>61</sup> It is sufficient to point out that there are those who would raise queries at each link in the chain, and perhaps especially at the second and third.

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57. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 352.

58. "Logic", pp. 10-12; Interpretation, pp. 350; 352ff.

59. "Logic", p. 12    60. Interpretation, p. 350. 61. See below, pp. 287.



Is it not possible, it will be asked, to conceive of an obligation which would have rootage in objective reality but not in any absolute ground? If we conceive a pluralistic universe, our values would be grounded in reality but not in absolute reality; but their claims upon our allegiance would be no less imperious because of the finite character of their source. Similarly, if we conceive of a network of partially conflicting values, each of which is in some sense relative, the highest of these would still deserve adherence despite the relativity of its authority. But its right to a complete devotion would rise merely from the fact that it was the best among a number of values all relative, not from its inherent absoluteness. Finally, if we conceive of a hierarchy of values within either a finite or a dualistic (or even a pluralistic) universe, the consummatory value within the hierarchy will possess a kind of 'absoluteness', but surely it does not in itself establish the existence of an Absolute--especially if the universe be dualistic or pluralistic by definition.

Such critics would, I think, be inclined to summarise their criticism in precisely the words which Dr. Baillie himself applied to Kant:--"Has he ever really offered any demonstration that our recognition of duty's claims upon us carries with it the belief that the universe, as moral environment, must be no less ethically constituted than ourselves as moral agents?"

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## IV.

A Critique of  
the Position.

Our criticism will be directed not primarily upon the turning-point in the moral argument--faith's implicit logic--which has been considered in the section just preceding, but rather against the wider setting in which Professor Baillie seeks to set this argument and the more general presuppositions upon which his position rests. Specifically it will raise questions at the following four points:-

- a. The writer's conception of religion; more particularly, his insistence on finding religion rooted in morality exclusively.
- b. His doctrine of the relation of moral to other values and their place in religious experience.
- c. The significance of reflection in the religious consciousness.
- d. The nature and function of religious apologetic.

It will be seen that these four topics strike very deeply into the whole ground-work of Professor Baillie's thought.

a. What is  
Religion?

It is perhaps not without significance that Professor Baillie carries us two-thirds through a very long and scholarly examination of religion without once telling us precisely what he understands by the term 'religion'. To be sure there is a definition introduced almost casually quite early in the introductory chapter, and a thoroughly understandable and acceptable one it is:--"in itself religion is a relationship or commerce between the human and the Divine"<sup>63</sup>. This is a definition on which, presumably, it would be possible to find a very wide measure of agree-



ment. We are left to presume that this is the conception of the nature of religion which the author wishes us to carry through his discussion. Some three hundred pages later we are confronted with his formal definition:-

"There are two converse forms into which our definition can be thrown. We might say that what lies at the heart of religion is a projection of our moral values into the real order of things.... Or we might speak of religion as an apprehension of reality through, and in terms of, our moral values.... Our present purpose will, however, be better served by a simpler phrase which will take in both the above meanings.... Here then is our definition: Religion is a moral trust in reality." 64

But this conclusion should not surprise us. For the starting point had determined that no other destination was possible.

At the very outset of his inquiry, Professor Baillie had proposed to bring the phenomenon which he intended to investigate--religion--clearly before us not by means of a definition but by the more vivid method of case-illustrations. He chooses two, selected he says because they are "situations in human experience in which what we call religious faith stands out in particularly bold relief, because in them it stands in contrast and opposition to the other mental elements that go to make up the situation; and not, as at other and happier times, in harmony and agreement with them." 65 The two instances are--the man of high character and noble ideals who nevertheless seems to be haunted by crippling misfortune; and the man of serious mind and high ideals of conduct who finds his inherited religious beliefs apparently invalidated by his studies in naturalistic

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64. Op.cit., p. 318.

65. Op.cit., p. 152.

science. The predicament of Job, and the dilemma of Amiel! The problem of personal evil in its most harassing and insupportable form, and intellectual difficulty in the face of the most powerful intellectual authority. Now, no one would wish to deny that these are genuine examples, and magnificent examples, of religion. Indeed they might be cited as cases of religious faith in its very noblest expression, religious faith par excellence. But, equally, no one with even a modicum of historic or philosophical knowledge could suggest that they are in any measure representative of religion in its scope and variety. Nor that they supply an adequate picture of what religion is upon which to base a comprehensive study of the subject. From the vast and multiform panorama of genuine religious experience, Professor Baillie has selected two instances of very similar variety--both cases in which the emphasis falls upon the dogged persistence of faith against apparently overpowering objective negative evidence, both cases in which the distinctively ethical, indeed the defiantly moral, element in the religious attitude is dominant--and then proposes to give us an analysis of religion with these instances as our examples of the phenomenon! No wonder religion is found to be grounded in morality. Religion is first described in terms of a purely ethical experience; and then is discovered to have its sources in ethics. Morality, having been introduced into the premise, is now triumphantly exhibited in the conclusion.

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To the attempt to find religion rooted in morality  
33. See above, p. 235.



exclusively, there are two insuperable objections--the evidence from the rise of religion, in the race and in the individual; and the evidence from the most mature and comprehensive religious experience.

There is no part of Dr. Baillie's discussion which is more baffling and exasperating than his handling of the data of primitive religion, unless it be his treatment of the relation of moral to other values. There are times when one is almost tempted to think that he rejects the evidence where it seems to threaten his a priori hypothesis, but is only too eager to welcome it when it promises to lend support to his views. The phenomena of primitive religion come in for consideration at a dozen or more places in the course of The Interpretation of Religion, but perhaps<sup>67</sup> most significantly in the critique of Troeltsch and Otto, and in the defence of Professor Baillie's own theory of<sup>68</sup> the origin of religion against possible objections. The position maintained throughout these sections and in most of the others is the same:--early students of primitive religion described it as pre-moral; this interpretation was due to "an elementary confusion of thought", the mistake of judging primitive ethics in terms of our own standards instead of in terms of ideals appropriate for that stage of advance; the truth is that the religion of primitive man is related to such standards of value as he possesses.

Now that position is interesting and important as far as it goes, if it be a sound reading of the historic facts (and there are not a few eminent anthropologists who would

67. Op.cit., Part II, Chapter IV.

68. Op.cit., pp. 307-11; 320-22.

maintain that it conveys an impression far beyond that warranted by the facts). In any event, it has very little significance in establishing Professor Baillie's point. For his central premiss is not that a people's religion is related to its moral standards, but that it is rooted in its moral standards. And for the latter assertion there is not, as far as I can discover, the slightest shred of shadowy evidence from the data of primitive religion. We should expect a people's religion to be related to their morals as we should expect--and find--their religion to be related to their art and their home life and their recreations; but we do not on that account assert that their religion has taken its rise out of their art or their family loyalty or their play. Indeed the history of the relations of religion and morality are instructive; they seem to show a progressive moralisation of religious ideas, an increasingly close linkage of religion and morality (as Professor Baillie is at pains to point out<sup>69</sup>). The whole of the evidence would seem to point to a conclusion which the general character of primitive life and the general history of civilisation would prepare us to expect:-- religion had its first rise in the history <sup>of man</sup> in many factors of which there non-ethical awe before there non-moral Power, the primitive 'numinous' was probably the most important, and primitive conscience a distinctly subordinate one; the early connection of religion and morality was, precisely as Tröeltsch and Otto maintain, a secondary one; with the progress in man's life as a whole, his advancing ethical

69. See op.cit., pp.400-413.



ideals and his advancing religious conceptions have been brought into a relationship of increasing intimacy and mutual fructification. Professor Baillie's master, Ritschl, saw the truth of the matter in his later researches and confessed his earlier misstatement of the matter by an addition to the third edition of Justification and Reconciliation which Professor Baillie quotes with reluctance and only to refute:-

"Religious knowledge....cannot be traced back to the conditions which mark the knowledge belonging to moral will, for there exists religion which goes on without any relation whatever to the moral conduct of life....For, only at the higher stages do we find religion combined with the ethical conduct of life. Religious knowledge moves in independent value-judgments, which relate to man's attitude to the world." 70.

Such an alteration in fundamental premiss must have cost its author no little trouble of mind and loss of pride. But it seems well-nigh indisputable that he has put the matter fairly and correctly.

There are moments when one seems to note a slight wavering in Professor Baillie's own conviction on this crucial issue of the priority of morality to religion. For example, in discussing the transition from ethical awareness to religious faith, it is said:-

"The certainty of conscience is a certainty which is logically prior to the certainty of faith.... Needless to say, such evidential priority may not, in the case of a particular individual, imply chronological priority." 71

But the admission is recaptured in the following sentence:-

"The fact of corporate tradition clearly interferes with the reproduction of the race's original order of knowledge in the learning-process of the individual." 72

So we learn that religion may arise in the individual, if  
 70. Ritschl, Justification and Reconciliation, Vol III, p. 205.  
 71. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 340. 72. Op.cit. p. 341.

not in the race, in sources other than the voice of conscience. Again, when Professor Baillie comes to trace the development of the conception of God, he recognises its earliest beginnings in either animism or, more probably, mana--primitive man's designation for vague supernatural potency, force or influence wherever it is recognised. M. Durkheim's statement is accepted that:-

"What we find at the origin and basis of religious thought are not determined and distinct objects and beings possessing a sacred character of themselves; they are indefinite powers, anonymous forces....whose impersonality is strictly comparable to that of the physical forces whose manifestations the sciences of nature study." 72

And this leads Professor Baillie to the conclusion that "it is possible to penetrate backward to a rudimentary form of religion in which the Power whose aid the ritual invokes has not yet come to be conceived of as a spiritual being" 73

And again, "Mankind's earliest gods are spirits who are conceived as possessing, and being the sources of, mana, and who for that reason come to be venerated and to have a place in religious ceremonials." 74 And once more, "The

germ of primitive religion is to be looked for not in the belief in spirits but in the conception of a supernatural potency that may be called to man's aid" 75 . But we are

immediately told that the great superiority of this theory of mana over the alternative theory of animism lies (not, apparently, in its closer fidelity to the facts, but) in the fact that "the notion of value is implicitly present in

the idea of mana" 76 . Here, if ever, we are face to face with -----

72. Durkheim, Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, p.200.

73, 74, 75. The Interpretation of Religion, p.384.

76. Op.cit., p.385.



an 'elementary confusion of thought'. For if value does attach to mana, it should be sufficiently clear from the writer's own statements that it is purely instrumental value and not in any sense what we mean by moral value--precisely the same kind of value which primitive man might find in water to feed his herds or cyclones to destroy his enemies or alcohol to dull his senses, the kind of value which might attach to any non-ethical source of Power which he might turn to the use of his non-moral desires. The natural and proper conclusion from the passages quoted from the text would seem to be that religion arises in man's response to what he conceives to be supernatural Powers of a non-moral character which he seeks to win for the furtherance of his ends, moral and otherwise. The same confusion of thought baffles us in Professor Baillie's final statement of his dissent from Otto's theory of the 'numinous'<sup>77</sup> ; but we have argued the point at perhaps undue length already.

Our final comment on the problem of primitive religion must be merely a notation of the principle of interpretation which Professor Baillie proposes for our use. In stressing the difficulty of discovering precisely what the inner experiences of primitive peoples were like, he presents not once but repeatedly, the astounding suggestion that our own inner knowledge of what religion means to us should be our ultimate guide. "The only final appeal is to our inward knowledge of what religion really is"<sup>78</sup> ; "our interpretation

77. The Interpretation of Religion, p.254.

78. Op.cit., p.189.

of the scanty objective data concerning primitive human mentality being very largely dependent upon our introspective knowledge of our own spiritual natures" <sup>79</sup> .

Would it be suggested, one wonders, that by the same principle when we discover primitive man contemplating some strange natural phenomenon which excites his wonder or dread, for example a shooting-star, we should properly interpret his emotions in terms of Professor Eddington's reaction to the same phenomenon? Or that when we see primitive man yielding to his instinctive passion for physical gratification in pursuit of a mate, we should read his inner experience in terms of what we know of the love of Elizabeth and Robert Browning? If there is one principle of interpretation which is banned by the canons of good criticism it is precisely this. If it is manifestly wrong to judge a mature human characteristic by its primitive origin, it is equally unsound to interpret 'roots' in terms of 'fruits'. Nor is Professor Baillie wholly free from apparent self-contradiction on this point also. In one breath we are warned that to judge the ethical standards of the savage by our own ethical canons is to be guilty of an elementary confusion of thought; <sup>80</sup> in the next that to interpret the primitive human mentality in the light of our own inmost spiritual experiences is the only sound method of procedure!

It is not merely the rise of religion to birth within primitive religion which gives the emphatic lie

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79. Op.cit., p.189.

80. Op.cit., p.308.



to Professor Baillie's account of the origin of religion in the moral consciousness. Essentially the same story is told by the rise of religion to birth within the soul of the child. We have already had occasion to urge this point<sup>81</sup> against Kant's parallel too-narrow theory of religion.

"The religion of childhood does not begin in consciousness of duty; it is brought to birth by the gift of love, devotion, sympathy, sacrifice, faith from another--parent, nurse, teacher, friend. The God whom children know does not speak through a voice within, but through a person without. And the sense of duty, as far as it is more than reluctant acquiescence in an external rule, is the glad return of the child's soul to the trust, the love, the high expectation of another. Religion begins, not in the awakening to something within myself, but in the spontaneous response to someone outside myself."

Now whether this is a true account of the characteristic beginnings of religious faith we must leave to the students of childhood religion, and to the witness of each man's own inner consciousness--a court of appeal to which Professor Baillie is always eager to concede a final authority.

The added tragedy of Professor Baillie's perverse reading of the facts of religion lies in the fact that it might have been saved from a measure of its absurdity if it had professed to give us a theory not of "religion itself" embracing "the furthest limits of our human traffic<sup>82</sup> with the Eternal World", but of mature religion. For, as far as we can understand it, Professor Baillie's view of the matter might be reduced to something like this analysis:-- the early life of races and of individuals very generally contains experiences with which are associated the emotions of awe, gratitude, obeisance, comradeship, and corresponding

81. See above, p. 71.

82. The Interpretation of Religion, pp. 63, 62.

ceremonial practices; these experiences are very commonly but quite mistakenly termed 'religious'; considerably later in the development of the race or of the individual there comes a time when there arises an acute awareness of the apparent enmity between Nature and human values; the earlier naive trust in the Power or Powers behind Nature wavers, and the beliefs mistakenly labeled 'religious' are overlaid with doubt; But as men meditate upon their values and serve them with whole-hearted loyalty, they find themselves projecting these values upon reality or reading reality in terms of their values; and finally they surrender themselves in complete trust to reality so conceived, against the apparently overwhelming evidence of scientific study and the facts of life; this final act of trust is religion, and to no preceding stage in men's maturing experience can the name properly be applied.<sup>83</sup> This, I suggest, is a form in which Professor Baillie's position might quite reasonably have been presented. It would have met an initial objection from those who would charge it with unjustified license with an old and widely used term, one of the great indispensable words in mankind's vocabulary. Question would be raised whether it is legitimate to exclude from the meaning of 'religion' what the overwhelming number of men have always regarded as 'religion' and identified by that name. But the meanings of the word are already legion; an original definition would, perhaps, do no harm.

To be sure, had Professor Baillie employed this device and agreed to furnish us with an interpretation  
 83. Cp. The Interpretation of Religion, pp. 252-255; 346-351; etc.



of 'mature religion' rather than religion in its most general and inclusive connotation, his rendering of the inmost character of mature religion would have had to face far more fundamental criticism than a mere terminological objection. And this time not from the voice of early religion, but <sup>from</sup> the voice of religion in its most advanced and comprehensive expression. And on two distinct counts-- a) the priority of morality over religion in mature experience, and b) the rootage of mature religion in ethical in contrast to other types of value-experience.

a). It is Professor Baillie's contention not merely that religion originates in morality, but that its progress depends upon and follows after prior advances in morality. And, again, in both racial and individual experience. The case as regards the religion of the race is made in the discussion of "The Nature of Religious Progress"<sup>84</sup>. The evidence from individual experience is presented in the same chapter in a study of the distinctive contribution of Jesus to the advance of religion. For the sake of economy of space our attention may be confined to the latter point. In seeking to explain how Jesus came to his supreme conception of God as loving and redeeming Father, the following conclusion is offered:-

"The secret of our Lord's insight is the universal secret of all religious insight: it is simply that His thought of God kept pace with His thought of human life. It was because He had a great new thing to say about how men should live with one another here below that He had this great new thing to say about what God above was like. He had made discovery of a new moral value-- and he applied it to His faith in God." 85

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84. The Interpretation of Religion, Part II, Chapter IX.

85. Op.cit., p.440.

"We now see plainly that the new thought of God to which the gospel of Jesus leads us is nothing else than an application to the eternal world of the secret discovered in the sphere of the life of the family." 86

Now whether that is a true account of the way by which Jesus' mind came to its unique hold on God is a question which could be answered in only one of two ways--by expert Gospel criticism, in which only the scholars may speak; or by an analysis of the inner processes of Jesus' consciousness, where even the most forward would hesitate to speak. Suffice it to say that there are able and lifelong students of Jesus' thought who would hold that it exactly reverses the true causal sequence or, at most, tells half the truth; that Jesus' direct reflection upon the character of God and his sense of personal communion with God were as instrumental in lifting his ideals for human living, as were the latter in elevating his thought of God. Shall we say that his advance to the thought of God as loving and redeeming father was wholly due to inference (albeit unconscious inference) from his observations of family life and the anticipation of his own sacrificial end? Or, to put the question in a slightly wider reference, shall we say that the religious insight of the eighth century prophets resulted from their advancing ethical consciousness, rather than that their advancing conception of what Jahwe demanded of his people resulted from their heightened personal consciousness of what Jahwe himself must be like? That Amos' great vision of the righteousness of God was derived in contrast to his growing abhorrence of the unrighteousness



Of Israel and not at all from his own reaching after God in the lonely night watches on the hillslopes of Tekoa and his sense of God's direct impact upon his life in the midst of that solitude? That Isaiah's vision of the Holy One and the Holy One's requirements for his life, could we but properly psycho-analyse it, would be seen to have sprung entirely from certain ethical experiences in his own life, and not at all from the experience of worship itself--the prophet's own vivid consciousness of the immediate voice of the Divine to his conscience? Or, to set the question in a still slightly wider reference, shall we affirm that the ordinary worshipper carries into the experience of personal worship just such religious insight as his moral experiences have furnished him, and returns from worship with precisely the same insight; that worship furnishes to him nothing of new spiritual or ethical vision, save as its atmosphere might bring to the surface of consciousness ethical truth already latently present? It may be that this sequence of queries should without exception be answered in the affirmative. If it be so, religion is reduced to a position of most inconsequential and ancillary dependence upon morality. And the significance of religious worship would appear to be quite incidental, its ethical value negligible. But the most serious difficulty would be to render a satisfactory explanation of the historic evidence for the apparent direct ethical fruits of high religious experience.

Would it not seem a more defensible view that morality

and religion are reciprocally related, if not as regards origin, at least as regards mutual fructification toward progress?<sup>87</sup> If religion is (as Professor Baillie has urged us to believe<sup>88</sup>) the mother of philosophy, of medicine, of politics, of law, of art and "of well-nigh everything else", are we to believe that in this realm alone--the sphere of moral insight, her fecund powers have failed her; she is

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87. Here, as at so many other points, Professor Baillie's own thought does not seem to be wholly clear in the matter, but it has not seemed necessary to display the inconsistencies in the text. For example, at one point he seems to hold to the view that the relations of religion and morality are reciprocally fruitful:--

"The relation of religious faith to our moral experience is thus seen to be in some sort a double one. First faith emerges out of the moral consciousness and then, having emerged, it quickens that consciousness. First it is born of moral desire and then, being born, it reveals itself as the only means whereby that desire may be fulfilled."  
(p.332)

And again, it is pointed out that the moral progress of humanity would have been even slower than it has been, "had not religion in its turn exercised an inspiring effect upon moral practice. New spiritual insights first reveal themselves as a quickening and illumination of the conscience; .... yet, had conscience not been strengthened and established by the co-operation of the existing religious conceptions, it would hardly have had the power to rise to those higher moral insights out of which the new religious conceptions have grown." (pp.412-413.)

But these are qualifications, not always easy to harmonise, upon the central doctrine. The latter is reiterated in a dozen statements of which these are typical:- "All ordinary reforms in religion are immediately due, not to the dawning realisation of a new ethical value, so much as to the carrying over of an existing value into the sphere of religious belief and practice.... It remains true of every forward move in religion, great or small, sudden or gradual, corporate or individual, that it goes back for its ultimate causation to some heightened realisation of value in the ethical sphere?... "The broad lines of the religious development of our race.... follows, stage by stage, the line of the development of the racial mores." (pp.411, 412, 413)

88. Op.cit., p.179. We do not pause to point out that it is a little difficult to understand how, if religion is wholly the child of morality and waits on an upthrust from within the moral consciousness to give it birth, it can itself be the parent of such a motley progeny, some of them apparently non-moral in character and many of them premoral in their chronological advent in mankind's history!



herself the child and not the parent, the child of morality? Indeed, if she is the mother of all the arts, has she not given birth to one of the elements in Professor Baillie's  
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broader interpretation of Morality? It would seem more plausible to expect that morals, like most of the others of the great human concerns and activities, had had its original nurture within the fertile shelter of religion and then, like them, had declared its majority, established its autonomous status and continued to bring helpful enriching contribution to its original parent. We have elsewhere suggested that the mutual relationship might be thought of somewhat in this fashion:-

"Vital religion--by its very nature fecund, germinative, creative--can and should give birth to ethics. Ethics cannot give birth to religion. The function of religion is to stir to life the latent creative energies, the incipient idealistic urges, within human nature; the task of ethics is to give those superabundant energies intelligent and constructive direction." 90

b). Once more, Professor Baillie's account of mature religion wants adequacy not only because he pictures its relationship to morality as one of dependence, but also because he interprets it in relation to moral experience exclusively, in disregard of the other great types of value-experience.

We have already urged that the whole inquiry is given an initially false and narrow<sup>r</sup> setting by the instances which Professor Baillie has chosen as typical cases for his analysis, the "specimens" for his "dissecting table". These,

89. Op.cit., pp. 304-7. See below, p. 272.

90. "The Sickness of Liberal Religion", in World Tomorrow, August, 1931, p. 259.

it will be remembered, were two--the man of high purpose and character who maintains his trust in God despite the pressure of unmerited adversity upon his life, and the man of similar worth who holds to his belief in God despite the apparently naturalistic conclusions of the prevailing science--cases which we have ventured to call the 'predicament of Job' and the 'dilemma of Amiel'. But surely, anyone determined to conduct a comprehensive inquiry into the nature of religion would need to lay alongside these true and notable illustrations many more chosen from the varied gamut of circumstance in which characteristically religious experiences take their rise. He would need to portray for us--the nature-lover set over against the immensities of stars and peaks and spaces; and the madonna wrapt in the glory of infancy; and the peasant bowed before high altar or simple hearthside; and the patient scientist at the moment of great discovery; and the reformer in the face of defeat and destitution; and the craftsman at the birth-moment of creative achievement; and the man who gazes into the eyes of <sup>a</sup> trusted friend; and ten thousand times ten thousand of the family of Everyman who, in the presence of lilies and birds and solitude and gay comradeship and glad laughter, have been certain of the companioning Presence of God and have known religion as "a relationship or commerce between the human and the Divine".

Surely we are not to think of Jesus' certainty of God as born only in the agony of Gethsemane or the harrowing doubt of the Cross; or primarily in these and similar



episodes of his life. And we are not to think of his gift of the same confidence to men as made exclusively through the travail of temptation in the Garden and his persistence in trust at the End, though it was made perhaps supremely there. Rather his communication of his own faith in God must have been the outcome of all manner of contact between him and them--his attitude toward children, his clear love of Nature, his homely humour, his own winsome and altogether trustworthy friendship, as well as his way of meeting life's bitter testing. And in this respect, his gift of assurance to men would be truly representative of God's gift of himself. He comes, and he is recognised, not alone in the voice of conscience commanding us to duty, but in every manifold touch of value upon our lives.

Probably the finally convincing denial of Professor Baillie's definition of religion would come from that source to which he is ever ready to grant authority in these matters--the voice of religious experience itself. Define religion as "a relationship or commerce between the human and the Divine" and that voice would reply with virtual unanimity, 'We understand what is meant; we recognise that as a true description of what we mean by religion.' But define religion as "a projection of our moral values into the real order of things", "an apprehension of reality through, and in terms of, our moral values", "a moral trust in reality", and millions of worshippers in every age and land, in the great eastern religions and within the

membership of Christianity, would rise up to protest:

'We repudiate your definition; that is not what the world has always known as religion, nor what we ourselves have experienced as religion; and that is not the way by which religion has actually come to birth within our souls.'

We are forced to a conclusion which has already been hinted. The sum of the matter would seem to be that Dr. Baillie starts with the determination to recognise as genuine religion no experience or conviction which is not primarily moral in character and which has not arisen from a dominantly ethical source; he concludes, inevitably, with the conviction that "religion is a moral trust in reality".

b. Moral and

Other Values.

Our criticism of Professor Baillie's general view of religion has occupied us longer than had been our intention. This is perhaps warranted by the basic importance of the issue for the validity of his whole position. The three other points in our critique must be given correspondingly summary consideration.

We have more than once called attention to the absence of clear consistency in Professor Baillie's attitude on a number of vital matters. This is nowhere so apparent or so confusing as in his treatment of the relation of moral to other values. It is his avowed determination to correct Kant's onesidedness at this point by giving to 'morality' a meaning sufficiently broad to bring all of the ultimate values within its scope. For



'morality' is to be understood as "the quest of the highest and most inclusive ideal which it is possible for man to seek after"<sup>91</sup>, and again as "but the art of living"<sup>92</sup>. But in actuality, throughout most of the discussion, morality appears as almost precisely what Kant meant by the term. And the resulting theology seems almost as open to the charge of narrowness, rigorism and moralism as that of the master. The impossibility of handling theory of values in this way and the unsatisfactoriness of Professor Baillie's treatment of the whole problem may be discovered in any of three ways:-

1. Through his own failure to maintain a consistent view-point in the matter.
2. Through an analysis of the nature and types of values.
3. Through the testimony of the 'experts'.

1. A brave start is made in the resolution to give to moral values the wider significance which would escape the most serious objection to the Kantian interpretation of religion. At the outset of the historic survey of this theory of religion it is said:-

"In order to avoid misunderstanding, it may be well to make a few preliminary observations concerning the meaning that is here to be attached to the terms morality and value. Morality is, of course, to be understood in its widest (which is, to be sure, its only proper) sense. In some modern writings the word has been taken more narrowly, being made to signify one particular (and not altogether praiseworthy) attitude to life rather than the art of living in general; and to anybody who has this usage in mind the declaration that all religious faith emanates from the moral consciousness must look both like an elementary historical solecism and like an attempt seriously to curtail the scope of religious aspiration. There is, however,

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91. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 274.

92. Op.cit., p. 304.

no possible excuse for such a usage, and in the discussion which follows the moral consciousness will be understood as including the awareness of all ultimate ends of desire of whatever sort." 93

Again, in a critique of Kant's way of stating the argument for God from morality, one of the three shortcomings of his statement is held to lie in the legalism and formalism which impoverish his interpretation of what morality is.

"The real root of our difficulty with Kant lies not in the nature of the bond which he forges between faith and morality but rather in the kind of morality to which religion is thus attached and in terms of which it accordingly comes to be interpreted. If morality means only keeping the commandments--'obedience to a categorical imperative'--we may well feel that it provides too narrow a basis for Christian faith to rest upon. But if (as a more adequate ethical theory would instruct us) morality be rather the quest of the highest and most inclusive ideal which it is possible for man to seek after, the case is surely very different. To envisage moral laws as divine commands is one thing; to envisage the goal of human endeavor as being in line with the eternal purpose of God is a very different thing." 94

Once more, in defending his own theory of religion as rooted in moral values against the charge that it threatens to impoverish the religious consciousness, it is said:-

"As for this line of objection generally, we cannot but feel that its point is not really made against the view of religion which unites religion with morality but rather against a certain narrow and rigoristic view of morality itself. If there was anything wrong with Pharisaism and Puritanism, it was not that their religion was too moral so much as that their morality was too legalistic..... Morality is after all but the art of living. It is that from which flow our mores. It stands for the control exercised upon our lives by our ultimate ends and ideals. It does not mean one particular way of living or one particular view of life but whatever way of living is right and good and whatever view of life is true. Our moral consciousness is but a convenient name for our awareness of those values which we feel bound to make ultimate in the guidance of conduct." 95

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93.Op.cit.,p.258.

94.Op.cit.,p.274.

95.Op.cit.,p.304-5.



And, finally, with reference to art as an avenue of approach to religion independent of and parallel to morality:-

"It is completely to misread the moral consciousness to suppose that it deals only with one kind of value, one kind of good, one kind of thing that is worth seeking or having or doing; on the contrary, its business is rather to instruct us as to the relative importance of all particular values, and so to show us what things are ultimately valuable and good, and what things are worth seeking and having and doing in the end. If morality is less than the whole of life, it is only as having characteristically to do with the ultimate, as distinguished from the proximate, ends of desire." 96

Now this portrait of 'morality' is so broad and altogether attractive that we feel an immediate favorable disposition toward it and the interpretation of religion which shall emerge from it. What could possibly improve on the idea of morality as the art of living, committed to no particular way of life except any which should prove good and no particular view of life except any which is true? Surely religion, at least in its more mature stages, is organically related to such a conception as that! Indeed, although there are certain specific phrases and sentences in the book which are difficult to harmonise with these exceedingly catholic definitions, I hardly think anyone would be likely to appreciate how far the actual treatment of morality, page by page and chapter by chapter, falls short of the anticipations these definitions arouse until he had steeped himself in the book and caught its underlying temper and tempo.

To be sure, so to employ the term morality seems, as in the case of Professor Baillie's use of 'religion' and

a number of other terms, a departure from familiar usage which might demand justification. For I think there can be little question but that, in the plain man's speech, morality is thought of as standing in particular relation to one rather than all of the ultimate ends of life, somewhat as art is conceived with reference to beauty and science or philosophy of logic with reference to truth. Professor Taylor favored the same departure from common practice in his earlier and more sophisticated writings when he said, "Morality is sometimes understood as a comprehensive name for all the practical side of life, including every experience in which the presence of an ideal can be detected"<sup>97</sup>, although he immediately recognised that so to employ 'morality' was to fly in the face of the parlance of "common sense"; and apparently he has, in his later writings, preferred to return to the great historic tradition which has envisaged three ultimate values--truth, beauty and goodness--and morality as especially concerned with the third.<sup>98</sup> Surely the classic triad which has stood through so many centuries must have some firm grounding in reality, and to seek to bring all three within the meaning of one is to court confusion of thought.

Professor Baillie's thought is never free from precisely this confusion. Hardly has he given us his first broad definition than he adds on the next page, "To place the roots of our religious faith in our moral nature is the

97. A. E. Taylor, The Problem of Conduct, p. 467.

98. Cp. cit., p. 467. See above, pp. 215ff.



same as to say that such faith is grounded in our  
<sup>99</sup> knowledge of good and evil" --not our recognition of  
 beauty and ugliness, or of truth and error. And the  
 handling of the relation of morality to art must prove  
 woefully unsatisfactory to anyone who happened to ap-  
 proach the question from an interest in art. First we  
 are told that morality is the guardian not of one type  
 of value but of all of them, and of all of them equally; and  
 that its business is to establish their relationships. But  
 at once it appears that "our deepest ethical standards"--  
 which are to guard all the ultimate values--are "standards  
<sup>100</sup> of character and service" ; surely 'character and service'  
 are not words drawn readily from the familiar vocabulary  
 of art. This begins to appear like the old fashioned meaning  
 of 'ethical' after all. And then we are warned that "Art  
<sup>101</sup> can only become religious by first becoming ethical" .  
 And finally," Consequently it is doubtful whether we are  
 at all right in speaking of art, taken by itself, as a source  
 of religious insight or a means of reaching God; seeing that,  
 when taken by itself, it is more likely to lead us away from  
 Him....The truth is that we are not likely to find God in  
 art unless we have already found Him in our life as a  
<sup>102</sup> whole." Can we say that the artist would lack justifica-  
 tion if he remarked, "Our original suspicion is immediately  
 vindicated. It is the old 'morality' which is meant after  
 all--not the custodian of all the values but the jealous  
 guardian of a single value, and one which all too often  
 seems to stand over against and in despite of the value

99. The Interpretation of Religion, p.259.

100. Op.cit., pp.305-6.

101. Op.cit., p.306.

102. Op.cit., p.306.

to whose service art is pledged. The wolf in sheep's clothing invites art in, not to nourish but to destroy!?

Perhaps the clearest indication of the fact that Professor Baillie has not really achieved a broader and inclusive meaning for 'morality' is found in his almost invariable identification of value and duty. "The Funda-<sup>103</sup>mental Certitude of Duty and Value" is a section heading. "The imperative<sup>104</sup> claim of the ideal" and "the certitude of duty" . "The deeper implications of our moral conscious-<sup>105</sup>ness" and "the consciousness of moral obligation" . "The major premise from which the logic of faith proceeds... the value-judgment par excellence--the consciousness of duty's claim upon our wills, the awareness of a distinction between a higher way that must be followed and a lower way that must be eschewed."<sup>106</sup> "Indeed we may say that to believe in duty and to believe in God are not, for the man of faith, two different beliefs, but only one belief. To believe in God is, at least in its beginnings, hardly more<sup>107</sup> than a deeper way of believing in duty." "And when we say that we 'ought' to do right, we do not mean that we want to do right, but much rather that the nature of things wants<sup>108</sup> us to do right, whether we want to do right or not" . (This sounds suspiciously like 'obedience to a categorical<sup>109</sup> imperative! ) Now, all this may be the language of morality; and it is the language of morality in the common use of the term. But it can hardly be claimed that it is

103. Op.cit., p.xiv and 340.

104. Op.cit., p.342.

105. Op.cit., p.338.

106. Op.cit., p.361.

107. The Roots of Religion, p.221.

108. The Interpretation of Religion, p.353.

109. Op.cit., p.274. See above, p.273.



a language native to or appropriate for aesthetic appreciation; perhaps hardly more for the search for truth. Morality may be including all values, but it is talking in terms which only one type of value would readily comprehend.

And that this is Professor Baillie's real feeling in the matter crops out more than occasionally:-

"Religion is, in the inmost heart of it, an affair .... of conduct, of how one lives one's daily life and faces one's daily task and trial." 110.

"We have in the end but two main alternatives to choose from--the view which makes faith's birth and growth in the soul depend on moral earnestness and depth, and the view which makes them depend on intellectual capacity and attainment." 111

Here we seem to see the intellectual values set in some sense over against the moral, while distinctively aesthetic values, as so often, escape notice altogether!

We have selected illustrations almost at random. They might be multiplied tiresomely. And in other connections--his critique of Romanticism, his hostility to Rationalism, his <sup>n</sup>handling of primitive religion discussed earlier. Or we might again refer to the instances of typical religion to which his mind instinctively turns--the defiance of faith in the presence of practical adversity and intellectual scepticism. As stated above, a deep immersion in the point-of-view as a whole would have to precede a full appreciation of our point. The quotations given will perhaps give a taste of its characteristic tone. On their evidence, one may put these queries:--

a. Would the artist or the scientist regard this as an adequate handling of the values for which he is concerned?

110. The Roots of Religion, p. 91.

111. The Interpretation of Religion, p. 369.

- b. Does morality in this interpretation differ essentially from the familiar historic meaning of morality as related primarily to the 'good', in distinction from the 'true' and the 'beautiful'?
- c. Does this interpretation of morality differ essentially from Kant's original view of it?

No, the truer wisdom on this confessedly obscure issue of the relation of the values is given by one of Professor Baillie's sources whom we quotes with apparently full agreement, indeed partly in his own paraphrase. We should regard this, I think, as his own real position in the matter and the terms in which his view should have been set forth:-

"The values of truth and beauty thus give rise to imperatives no less than the values of moral excellence, but 'the kinds of these imperatives may conflict; and morality, which, on the one hand, admits their authority, claims on the other hand, to override the authority of any one of them (except its own) for sufficient reason. The scientific or artistic conscience, as we have seen, is a conscience; yet the general or moral conscience asserts its claim to be suzerain over both'." 112

Here, a final authority is reserved for morality, but it is the authority of a military commander with the power of suppression, not the authority of a gracious arbiter with capacity for comprehensive synthesis. And morality's final authority is granted only after recognition on the one hand of the prior authority as well as existence of the independent values of truth and beauty, and on the other hand of the independent character of the values of moral excellence, not as embracing the other two but as distinguished from them. Finally it is recognised that between the imperatives

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112. John Laird, The Idea of Value, p. 54. Quoted in The Interpretation of Religion, p. 306.



arising from the various values there is all too likely to be conflict, and the consequent need of an arbitrator.

2). The impossibility of bringing all the ultimate values under the wing of morality is further shown by an analysis of the nature of these values. I mean such an analysis as that of Professor Sorley, which we have already noted with appreciation.<sup>113</sup> To confine attention to the distinction between beauty and goodness, his main contention, it will be remembered, was that the two values could be clearly differentiated at at least two points. First, in the attitude each calls forth--for beauty, admiration; but for goodness, approval. Secondly, in the object to which the value-judgment attaches--in the first instance, to an object as beautiful in and for itself, with only a distinctly secondary reference to the human agent; but in the case of goodness, to a person, and to an action only as the external proof of the character or intention of a person. To give a single illustration. If I see one man rescue another from drowning, I instinctively pronounce the action 'good'; but if I discover that the rescue has been for the purpose of inflicting greater torture on the rescued man, the action at once loses its character as 'good'; what matters is the attitude and design of the doer of the act. On the other hand, if I see a very moving picture of a woman which I take to be a Madonna, I pronounce it both 'beautiful' and 'good'; but if I discover that its purpose is not to inspire religious devotion but to seduce youth, it is no longer 'good',

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113, See above, p. 125 ff.

but its character as 'beautiful' is not affected; what matters is a quality of the picture as a picture, without regard to its purpose or the moral character of its creator. In other words, the beauty of an object refers to something inherent in the object; but the goodness of an action to the character and design of the doer.<sup>114</sup> And the tendency of the different ideals to "fall asunder" and even to conflict is pointed out with refreshing frankness and clarity by Professor Sorley. To be sure they find their true unity in a "full view of the worth of life", but this is by no means assured in him whose concern centers in matters of "character and volition", i.e. in the "life of duty",.<sup>115</sup>

3. A final appeal, if needed, may be made to those who are by general consent 'experts' in these matters. We have already suggested the question whether those whose great devotion is to science or to art, those to whom the Ultimate Source of all ultimate value has spoken through truth or through beauty or through that simpler and more universal voice of human love, would be likely to recognise Professor Baillie's 'interpretation of religion' as in any sense an adequate rendering of the inmost nature and validity of religion as they have known it. Their answer almost certainly would be in the negative.

#### c. The Place of Reflection in Religion.

One further respect in which Professor Baillie's thought fails to maintain reasonable consistency with itself, and in consequence is led on to a false interpretation of 114. Sorley, Moral Values and the Idea of God, p. 32.  
115. Op. cit., pp. 508ff. Cp. pp. 165ff.; 467; etc.



religion concerns the significance of reflection in the religious consciousness. The main burden of his conviction on this point seems clear enough. It is precisely what we should expect from one who wishes to find religion grounded, not in any intellectual process nor in the realm of feeling, but in the activity of will as it lifts our experiences of value into affirmations of moral faith. It appears clearly<sup>116</sup> in the critique of "The Speculative Method in Theology" and again in the discussion of "The Rationalistic Theory<sup>117</sup> of Religion" .

"While disciplined academic learning and the pursuance of strict scientific method undoubtedly count for a very great deal in the study of metaphysics, we cannot help feeling that religion is a thing for simple men.... Here is a region in which pre-eminence follows not upon the possession of a more perfect scientific method but upon the possession of a purer and simpler heart." 118

"Religion's faith is not a hypothesis, but a sacred trust. What it manifests is not the humble and empirically minded acceptance by the human mind of nature's appearances, but rather the self-assertion of the human spirit over against nature." 119

"The determining conditions of religious belief are moral conditions.... Nothing counts here but the firmness of the hold we have upon our values and the 'liveness and steadiness' with which they are present to our minds in all their proper richness and depth.... What avails here is not theoria but praxis. Not to him who passively contemplates them do our values reveal their Divine significance and depth, but only to him who yields himself to their imperious claim. And therefore it is that, 'Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God'.... The assurance of the Divine Companionship has in every age been promised not alone to the learned thinker, nor to him in any wise pre-eminently, but to all those who have sought it with a true and humble heart.... Not good deeds are here required; but a humble, childlike, patient, aspiring heart." 120.

These passages, I suggest, are thoroughly 'in character' with

116. The Interpretation of Religion, Part I, Chapter IV.

117. Op.cit., Part II, Chapter II. 118. Op.cit., p.182.

119. Op.cit., p.185. 120. Op.cit., pp.363-368.

the dominant point of view. But there are others, and by no means few or incidental, which appear in sharp contrast and seem to give to the interpretation of religion a decidedly intellectualist tone.

"Whatever may be true of other experiences, of religious experience it must be said that it is itself essentially reflective in character--born of reflection and constituted by reflection. No being, it is granted, could be religious who could not think; and so far as we know or can guess, no being who can think is wholly without the germs of a religious consciousness. Therefore, seeing that thought consists in nothing else than the manipulation of ideas, it cannot be true that 'ideas are all foreign to religion!'" 121

"Rationalism seems to be right in believing religious insight to be a product of intelligent reflection....The kind of intelligent or rational insight in which religion takes its rise is none other than moral insight." 122

The difficulty of reconciling these two selections of quotations (and, be it remembered, each is representative of a considerable portion of the text) would seem to stand forth on their surface. Indeed, if reflection and thought are regarded as synonymous and thought consists in "the manipulation of ideas", it is difficult to see how religion could be held to take its rise in "intelligent reflection" on any other than a rationalistic theory of religion.

In fact the most convincing refutation of this latter picturing of religion would seem to lie precisely in Professor Baillie's own test cases, his instances of religion par excellence. Strange paradox that one who cites as typical of the rise of faith Amiel and Job should then tell us that religion takes its rise in "intelligent reflec-



tion". For Amiel is portrayed to us as one torn by conflict between 'intellect' which counselled scepticism and his 'heart' which demanded faith; and his significance as a typical devotee of religion arose just from the fact that he trusted the latter against the former. Similarly, the historic portrait of Job is of one deep in bitter reflection upon life's misuse of him who rose to the height of religious faith precisely at the moment when he thrust reflection from his mind and banished his fellow-counsellors from his presence with the cry, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." In neither typical instance, as far as I can see, was intelligent reflection of the slightest possible use to the troubled mind, but rather a positive disservice. In neither instance did the religious man become an example of the life of faith until he substituted for thought a blind trust of self against all the evidence reflection urged upon him. And this is a faithful account of the religious man facing the problem of evil. I recall one of the more advanced intellectual leaders in religion in America telling me that at the time of his child's death, all the arguments for God and immortality which he had employed in discussion with college students repeated themselves in his mind like a phonograph record but brought him less than no peace; until finally he found himself saying to himself, "Look here, old man, why don't you trust?" As he did, peace came. That would seem to be a case in point of what Professor Baillie terms "the phenomenon of faith".

We do not say that that is the only way in which

religious faith comes to birth in the human soul for, unlike Professor Baillie, we do not hold religious faith to be always grounded in moral experience. But we do suggest that that is the way which is wholly congruous with his theory of religion. In any event, if religion be said to be trust in the Ultimate Goodness against the prevailing evidence which the mind possesses, it is hardly less than preposterous to propose that such experience of trust arises out of reflection.

#### d. The Function

It was our contention that Professor Baillie had

of Apologetic. unhappily circumscribed his investigation of religion at the very outset by furnishing less than adequate illustrations of what religion is. By the same token, he has thrown the whole task of apologetic into a somewhat false light by an unwarrantedly limited definition of what theology is. The task of theology, it will be remembered, was defined very explicitly. It is, purely and simply, to "lay bare the nerve of faith", to interrogate the religious consciousness as to what it finds religion to be and to record the answers to that question. In particular it is warned against the temptations to construct systems, and it is forbidden to seek or accept the slightest possible light from any other source as to the truth and validity of religion's certainties.

"It is in a very real sense true that theology, considered as a science, has no special means of its own whereby it can demonstrate the fundamental validity of the religious consciousness and the fundamental truth of religious belief. In the end all it can do



is to take over into itself the assurance which already and natively belongs to faith. And this assurance it passes on to metaphysics. It is therefore incompetent for metaphysics to attempt to throw any new light on the nature or degree of the validity attaching to the religious point of view....The one conclusion which clearly emerges is that, whatever be its real task, metaphysics, considered as such, can have no new and peculiar light of its own to throw upon the religious problem." 124.

A question immediately suggests itself--what if the "assurance" which theology receives from faith and in turn passes along to metaphysics should prove in radical conflict with the "assurance" on the same issue which metaphysics has received from some other science. Professor Baillie's reply seems quite clear:--theology maintains unquestioningly the certainties furnished it by faith. Metaphysics has no power to criticise them or to suggest criticisms of them for it does not possess the inner understanding from which alone such criticism could be made; it must accept them unaltered and weave them into its total view as well as it can. Now, memory of the age-long and tragic warfare between theology and the sciences or philosophy would urge the acceptance of such a device only as a last resort. We know only too well the proclivity of faith to pass on to theology and then in turn to metaphysics all manner of assurances which subsequent centuries have taken in humiliating surrender. Now will it do to remark that these particular assurances were outside theology's proper sphere. At the time of their declaration faith did not regard them as in any sense outside her proper sphere. It is clearly out of the question satisfactorily

to demark those elements of truth on which theology's word shall possess an absolute and unquestioned authority, and those which may be handed over to this or that special science for similar illumination. It is a safe hazard that theology is today confidently asserting on the sure certainty of faith any number of beliefs which no self-respecting theologian will profess a hundred years hence.

It is at once a broader and a humbler task which should be proposed for theology. Not merely to search out and articulate the implicit logic in the moral consciousness' rise to faith in God, though that is admittedly no easy or unimportant undertaking. But rather to reveal the manifold ways by which faith takes its rise within the human soul, to seek to discover their reference the one to the other, and to seek to bring the whole body of religious conviction into mutually enriching relationship with other sources of knowledge as they, likewise, present themselves to metaphysics for criticism and synthesis. We are not urging that theology should accept its premisses from the sciences or metaphysics. Or that faith should surrender its deep certainties merely in the face of what metaphysics may say. We are urging that truth is too great and obscure and many-sided a reality and faith's many beliefs too uncertainly sure to warrant the cavalier attitude which Professor Baillie recommends. And we are suggesting that it would be more appropriate and more sincere if theology, as the point of reference between religion and mankind's other pathways toward truth, should accept as part of its respon-



sibility an earnest wrestling with problems of apparent disagreement, that theology may bring its own unique contribution fully into the purview of a sympathetic metaphysics, and may in turn convey to religious experience for her greater enrichment the insights of the other disciplines. If theology should so conceive her task, it might be that Professor Taylor's hope for her would come true; and she should once again be discovered to be the Queen of the Sciences.

## V.

The Problem  
of Evil.

There has emerged in the course of the foregoing discussion Professor Baillie's attitude on three of the four questions which we have agreed to put to each of the writers of our survey--the objectivity of values, the relation of values to Nature, and the relation of moral to other values. It remains to consider his answer to the problem of evil. This is the single issue in the light of which the value and importance of the whole position may be most appropriately estimated.

There is a sense in which Professor Baillie's writings contain no explicit consideration of the problem of evil; there is a sense in which his interpretation of religion is just a consideration of the problem of evil. In one view, he offers us no specific light on the question; but, in another view, if we are won by his point of view, the question no longer remains. These paradoxical statements require elucidation.

We have already noted several times the very

definite and limited perspective in which he has elected to conduct his investigation of the nature of religion. The two examples of the setting in which religious faith characteristically comes to birth in the soul of man are both circumstances of difficulty for belief--the evil of acute and unmerited personal suffering and the evil of an apparently indifferent and mechanistic Nature. That this is, in Professor Baillie's view, the familiar atmosphere in which faith habitually lives and grows is clear enough.

"The truth is that the assurance of God is much more an assurance with which we, as spiritual beings, face the facts of nature than it is an assurance which we derive from the contemplation of these facts.... What religion manifests is not the humble and empirically minded acceptance by the human mind of nature's appearances, but rather the self-assertion of the human spirit over against nature." 125

"What faith has always stood for is just this persuasion that, however heavily the world's evils may press upon us, yet in those mysterious and searching experiences of the spirit's life--experiences whose actuality nobody can deny, like the vision of ideal goodness, the felt zeal for righteousness, the sense of obligation, the sense of sin and of repentance after sin, and the power to rise above the leadings of mere natural impulse towards a higher plane of living--we are having personal dealings with the Soul of the Universe and the Power from which all things proceed." 126

Quotations in the same tenor might be multiplied manyfold. The sum of it all is:--Religion ~~is~~, in Professor Baillie's view, <sup>is</sup> that experience in which man asserts his certainty of, and rests his implicit trust in, an Ultimate Power for goodness, against the well-nigh overpowering facts and forces of evil which surround his life.

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125. The Interpretation of Religion, p.185.

126. "The Logic of Religion", p.10.



This is one paradox, and the most important one, which is, as it were, the very seedplot of genuine and vigorous faith. There is another--a paradox which, in a sense, is the obverse of the paradox of evil--the paradox of grace. It is the fact that when the man of faith "does a base thing he blames himself bitterly and accepts the whole burden of responsibility for it, whereas when he does a fine thing he does not pride himself on his achievement, but refuses to accept the credit as his own"<sup>127</sup>. Now it is clear that there is nothing logical in this; it is just as illogical as that a man, confronting the weight of unjust adversity or of legitimate doubt, should proclaim his certainty of God. Indeed it is precisely in the experience of "grace" that religion's defiance of all obvious and 'common-sense' rationality is most inescapable; here it is most clearly "nonsense to the Greeks"<sup>128</sup>. Professor Baillie has put the paradox in its double form when he describes to us the predicament of a man wrestling with temptation greater and more insidious than he has ever hitherto confronted. This is faith's way of meeting the situation:-

"I am impelled to speak as to One who understands. I am impelled to kneel and pray. And if I succumb to the temptation, then I am impelled to such penitence, such confession of my fault and such a seeking for forgiveness as can have no proper meaning except within a personal intercourse; while if I triumph over the temptation, I feel, or know I ought to feel, no pride and self-congratulation as at a conquest achieved by my own unaided power, but rather once again the impulsion to worship and to give thanks and to sing to the praise of Him who has triumphed in me." <sup>129</sup>

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 127. "The Logic of Religion", p.15.  
 128. I Corinthians 1:23.  
 129. "The Logic of Religion", p.16.

We have said that Professor Baillie's treatment of the problem of evil furnishes a basis for an estimate of his position as a whole. The question which each reader must put to himself is--are the circumstances which Professor Baillie pictures as surrounding the man of faith a true representation of the setting in which human life is placed? If they are, our estimate of his theism should be a high one. For there are but three main alternative views in this crucial matter. There are those who hold that evidence for the Christian God may be clearly read in the facts of Nature and ordinary human experience; but the tragic reality of injustice and suffering would seem to render so easy an optimism insupportable. We must choose between the remaining alternatives. There are those who hold that there is much strong evidence for the goodness of God in the orderliness, the progress and the ~~purpose~~ purpose within Nature, and in the manifold touch of the Divine upon human experience, and especially in the rationality of the Order of Values, but that this evidence is never completely satisfying or convincing; faith is indispensable as the final bulwark and vindication of religious belief<sup>130</sup>. But there are those who find little assurance of importance in Nature or man's common-place experience, who see life characteristically face-to-face with adverse circumstance, and for whom religious faith appears only as the brave defiance of man's inmost spirit hurled at the burden life thrusts upon him. Now, if the latter view seems to one the

130. This would, I judge be a fair rendering of the attitudes of Professors Sorley, Taylor, and Pringle-Pattison.



true reading of the facts, then he will grant to Professor Baillie's 'interpretation of religion', in spite of its patent inconsistencies and its unjustified negations (for these, in the final analysis, are unhappy blemishes upon his single central argument), a high measure of respectful and grateful praise.

## VI.

### Final Comment.

Probably few things are more distasteful to a writer than the attempt of a critic to explain shortcomings in the writer's thought by reference to certain of his mental characteristics, by what some writers might contemptuously refer to as a 'psycho-analysis' of his convictions. But my own study of Dr. Baillie's mind, not merely through his writings but through a very considerable personal contact, has increasingly suggested to me two sources of the features of his thought which we have found it necessary to criticise unfavorably. These conclusions, if correct, may prove helpful to a truer understanding of his position. The weaknesses in Dr. Baillie's thought are, I believe, largely due to two facts:-

a. Two factors have been majorly influential in the formation of Professor Baillie's conviction--the general view-point of the Platonic philosophy, and the rigorous moralism of Scotch Presbyterianism. Intellectually, his mind has found its true kinship in Plato; religiously, he is a true son of John Knox and Immanuel Kant; his nature feels a deep spiritual sympathy with each of the two strains

which have so much influenced its development. Now there are important respects in which these two types of thought cannot be harmonised. They have never achieved anything like harmonious reconciliation within Professor Baillie's philosophy. It is this fact, it may be suggested, which is largely responsible for the inconsistencies of <sup>his</sup> thought. When we are promised a broad and inclusive investigation of religion which will not confine its scope to any one type of religious thought or even to the Christian religion, we are in the atmosphere of a catholic philosophical point-of-view; when it subsequently develops that nothing is to be recognised as religion unless it springs solely from the individual moral consciousness, the sense of duty, we hear unmistakeable echoes of the voices of Kant and Ritschl. When we are assured that 'morality' is a term whose true meaning would embrace all of the ultimate values and be nothing else than the quest of the good life itself, we seem again to be under the irenic spell of the master of the Academy, though it is not certain that he would have fully approved of the absorption of all values within the 'Good' in quite this manner; but closer examination reveals that the interpretation actually given 'morality' would gladden the sympathies of Kant but horrify any loyal Platonist. When we discover that religious experience is "essentially reflective in character--born of reflection and constituted by reflection", we have once more returned to the halls of the philosophers, though this time perhaps more in the spirit of Hegel than of the great humanitarian Plato; but when it is maintained that religion is a "thing for



simple men" whose precondition is not ability of intellect but humility, childlikeness, purity of heart, we recognise the authentic features of the great Christian Puritan tradition. There are times when the narrowness of Professor Baillie's conception of what may be called religion outdoes Ritschl. There are times when the rigor of his ethical ideal seems almost to exceed Kant's moralism. But in the third particular where we personally would be most prepared to stand with him against the more philosophical view and in loyalty to a simple untutored piety, the weight of his favor seems on the whole to swing to the intellectualist interpretation of religion. In any event, we are suspended between such a theory of religion as might be expected in a very liberal Christian Platonist, and a defence of such a strict Puritanism as would gladden the heart of a stalwart of the 'old kirk'.

b. Whatever his intention, Professor Baillie's mind does not possess a high capacity for catholicity. He is not able to enter sympathetically into the merits of a position from which he feels instinctive recoil. It is this limitation which estops him from such a comprehensive analysis as he had marked out for his enterprise. We are assured at the outset that it is not the religion of a particular age or sect or even the religion of a great world-faith which is to occupy us but "religion itself in its most universal and deepest significance", our whole human insight into the Eternal World." The guidance of Schleiermacher must be rejected because he thought theology should

aim merely to reveal the faith of an existing branch of the Church. Likewise the leadership of Ritschl whose greatest failing was that he could not allow his thought to encompass true religion beyond the ranks of organized Christianity. Actually what we are given in Professor Baillie's powerful book is not an 'interpretation of religion', nor even of Christianity, nor of the Protestant type of Christianity, but a masterly defence of the very limited and particular brand of Protestant theology which had its origin in the thought of Immanuel Kant and traces its central convictions directly to him. Of this particular theory of religion, The Interpretation of Religion is possibly the finest exposition and most spirited apologia which the Twentieth Century has brought forth. But the exceedingly narrow limits of its view of religion and of its author's appreciation of the variations of true religion debars it from adequacy, either religious or philosophical.



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CHAPTER SIX--THE MORAL ARGUMENT OF JOHN BAILLIE.

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CHAPTER SEVENPROFESSOR PRINGLE-PATTISON'S THEISMCharacteristics  
of His Thought.

Chronologically Professor Pringle-Pattison should precede the other authors of our study. He was their senior in age, and his most important theistic argument which was also his magnum opus, The Idea of God in the<sup>1</sup>  
Light of Recent Philosophy, antedated the major work of each of the other writers whom we have considered. But a number of considerations have urged postponement of investigation of his thought until the end. For one thing, speaking strictly, his theism is hardly to be classified as a "restatement of the moral argument". To be sure it has been truly pointed out that "it is largely by means of the concept of value that the author reaches a conclusion demanding definitely theistic language"<sup>2</sup>; but with a characteristic ample inclusiveness which sometimes blurs really important distinctions, values are considered in the large without careful discrimination of types of value and with no special attention to moral values as such. Indeed Professor Pringle-Pattison's thought fetches a wider circle than any of our other authors. The evidence for God from scientific study, in particular, is fundamental for his final conclusions; and his lifelong allegiance to the general idealistic tradition has led him to speak of his philosophy as a form of "objective, transcen-

1. Oxford, 1917; 2nd edition, revised, Oxford, 1920.

2. William Temple, in Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 415.



dental or absolute Idealism"<sup>3</sup>, though an Idealism forcefully "disentangled" from "the epistemological heresy of Subjective Idealism or Mentalism"<sup>4</sup>. It is, in fact, an attempt to develop what we have termed an "inclusive metaphysical view"<sup>5</sup>; and its broader and more catholic reach make it an especially useful point of departure for our own final summary.

Then Professor Pringle-Pattison's handling of a number of the issues which we have come to regard as central--especially the relation of values to Nature and, to a less degree, the objectivity of values and the relation of moral and other values--is the most satisfactory we have met. His critique of Kant and his analysis of the causes of contemporary confusion in theistic thought are almost identical with those to which we have been led on independent grounds<sup>6</sup>; and his basic insistence that man is "organic to Nature" and that the whole cosmic process is properly interpreted only in the light of its bringing forth of man coincides with what we shall suggest as the happiest starting-point for a constructive approach to theism.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the significance of distinctively religious experience is more adequately domesticated within a general philosophy of values than in any of the other statements. These facts among others have led us to postpone consideration of Professor Pringle-Pattison until this point.

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 3. The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy, p.190.  
 4. Op.cit., p.421.  
 5. See above, p.88.  
 6. See above, pp.57-72, and below, p.358, n2.  
 7. See below, pp.358ff.

It is hardly an overstatement that the fontal convictions and the controlling outlines of Professor Pringle-Pattison's thought remained essentially unchanged throughout his philosophical life. A more striking contrast to Professor Taylor in this particular could hardly be imagined. Pick up his writings at almost any point in the nearly fifty years of his active scholarship and one discovers the stress falling upon the same notes--the futility of a mechanistic reading of Nature, the parallel delusion of a strictly Hegelian monism, man's rational life as our best key to reality, the Divine Nature incarnate in and revealed through mankind's noblest aspirations after values. The thought characteristically takes off from a vigorous and uncompromising critique of Kant's dualism of 'noumenal' and 'phenomenal', 'knowledge' and 'faith', and of its crippling disservice to subsequent speculation; and in the counter-assertion that "the phenomenon is the noumenon so far as it has manifested itself", in a plea for "the reality of appearances". An early excessive fascination for Hegel's ready solution of all philosophical tangles quickly gave place to a criticism of Hegelianism so stringent that the critic thought it necessary to apologise for his apparent lack of appreciation; but the dominating power of that alluring dialectic remained with him and is majorly

8. The Philosophy of Religion in Kant and Hegel, Cht. II; Scottish Philosophy, last chapter; Hegelianism and Personality, espec. Chts. 1 and 2; Idea of God, espec. Cht. II.

9. Idea of God, p. 214      10. Op.cit., p. 216.

11. The Philosophy of Religion in Kant and Hegel, Cht. III, (published in 1882; reprinted in The Philosophical Radicals and Other Essays, pp. 215ff.

12. Hegelianism and Personality, pp. 221ff.



influential in his final Idealism . Almost his first constructive attack upon metaphysical issues gave his governing convictions in the preface:-

"Man as rational, and, in virtue of self-conscious reason, the free shaper of his own destiny, furnishes us, I contend, with the only indefeasible standard of value, and our clearest light as to the nature of the divine" 14

"Our human rendering of the divine.... must rest ultimately, I think, upon a conviction of the absolute value of the ethical life. Every idealistic theory of the world has for its ultimate premiss a logically unsupported judgment of value--a judgment which affirms an end of intrinsic worth and accepts thereby a standard of unconditional obligation." 15

And in the Inaugural Lecture delivered on the occasion of his induction to the chair of Logic and Metaphysics in  
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Edinburgh University and reprinted in this same volume, there is to be found an even clearer foreshadowing of the line of argument which his mind was to follow throughout its development.

only  
"I have time here to mention one or two points on which I think that a true philosophy should lay stress, and on which it should lay special stress at the present time. The first is the necessity of a teleological view of the universe." 17

"As it defends the truth of teleology in spite of former abuses of the principle, so it has to champion the truth underlying the old view which made man the centre of the universe.... Philosophy must be unflinchingly humanistic, anthropocentric." 18

"Not to man as a creature specially located upon this earth, but to man and all creatures like him who are sharers in the life of thought, and called thereby to be authors of their own perfection--to man as rational, all things are relative. To him the creation looks; for him all things are made.... To me the old idea of the world as the training-ground of individual

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13. The Idea of God, pp. 38, 67, 218, 304, 415, etc., etc.

14. Man's Place in the Cosmos, p. vi. 15. Op.cit., p. vii.

16. October 26, 1891.

17. Man's Place in the Cosmos, p. 39.

18. Op.cit., p. 42.

character seems to offer a much more human, and, I will add, a much more divine, solution than this pitiless procession of the car of progress (Hegel's interpretation of history as the incarnation of the divine nature).... The possibility of any theodicy depends on our being able to show that nature and nature's ways are not the last word of creation. Nature is non-moral, indifferent, and pitiless; but man is pitiful and human nature flowers in love and self-denial, in purity and stainless honour.... We shall do well to recognise in such attributes of human-kind our nearest glimpse into the nature of the divine. The part is not greater than the whole; and we may rest assured that whatever of wisdom and goodness there is in us was not born out of nothing, but has its fount, somewhere and somehow, in a more perfect Goodness and Truth." 19

More than twenty years later when the opportunity offered by the Gifford Lectureship was seized upon by Professor Pringle-Pattison to throw his meditations on the theistic question into systematic and comprehensive form, a full half of the volume was devoted to a detailed outworking of precisely the same convictions. The "lower Naturalism" of a mechanistic science is made to give way before a "higher Naturalism" in which the stress falls upon the teleological character of the evolutionary process. Man is portrayed as at once rooted in Nature and yet the culmination of Nature's developing process. In his ethical and social qualities which constitute his humanity is to be sought light on the nature of the ultimate Life behind Nature; that final source of man's values cannot be interpreted in lower categories than the high fruitage to which it has given birth.

"Man must be taken as organic to nature.... From the side of the higher Naturalism, I sought to emphasize man's rootedness in nature, so that the rational intelligence which characterizes him appears as the culmin-



ation of a continuous process of immanent development. ....And so it is that the sentient and, still more, the rational being appears as the goal towards which Nature is working, namely, the development of an organ by which she may become conscious of herself and enter into the joy of her own being.

"The nature of the Power at work in any process is only revealed in the process as a whole, and the world is not complete without man and his knowledge.... Man is, after all, the child of nature, and it is on the basis of natural impulses, and in commerce with the system of external things, that his ethical being is built up. Hence the characteristics of the ethical life must be taken as contributing to determine the nature of the system in which we live. According to the principle of value and the distinction between lower and higher ranges of experience, they should, indeed, carry us nearer to a true definition of the ultimate Life of which we are partakers than categories which suffice to describe, at most, the environmental conditions of human existence.

"God as immanent--the divine as revealed in the structure and system of finite experience--this may be said to have been the text of (the first half of) the discourse and the outcome of my argument." 20

And, again, after an interval of another ten years, in his last published work but one, we find a studied dependence upon the same fundamental presuppositions:-

"Man can no more rise spiritually above himself in his own strength than he can raise himself from the ground by tugging at his own shoulder-straps. We did not make ourselves, and we do not weave our ideals out of nothing. They are all derived; they point to their source in a real Perfection, in which is united all that, and more than, it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

"Here, as elsewhere, nothing comes from nothing--whatever elements of goodness exist in us must have their source in the Power that brought us into being, and the ideals of unattained perfection to which we reach forward are due to the same inspiration. On this, which seems the only reasonable view, the permanent ideals which have lighted mankind on its way must be taken as our best clue to the inmost nature of the real...." 21

These quotations will sufficiently indicate how thoroughly 'of a piece' was the lifelong basic certainty of the mind which is the immediate subject of our study.

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20. The Idea of God, pp. 210, 211, 213, 215.

21. The Idea of Immortality, pp. 193--195.

Before passing to a detailed examination of his thought, reference must be made to one feature of Professor Pringle-Pattison's habitual method in writing--a feature which renders a concise but comprehensive exposition of his philosophy especially difficult. I mean his practice of revealing his own position only incidentally in the course of a critical examination of other writers. His published writings are almost entirely expository in character; and it is precisely here that his rare gifts of appreciation and discrimination found their most felicitous expression. His book-reviews were models, if it be thought that the primary function of a book-review should be to reveal the central argument of the book in brief compass. His note on Sorley's Moral Values and the Idea of God in the Hibbert Journal from which we have quoted above is a literary and expository masterpiece; but characteristically it offers absolutely no critical comment; it tells us what the author has said but gives no hint of the reviewer's dissents, if any. And even in his own magnum opus Professor Pringle-Pattison offers no systematic statement of his own theism; fragments of his personal conviction come to light here and there along the way as the discussion reviews one after another recent philosophy; but the reader must piece them into a mosaic of his own devising with little direct help from their maker. It should be understood that this unusual method has been deliberately chosen; in the preface to The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy, the author



intention in the matter is explained:-

"In short, although it consists largely of criticism, the interest of the book is neither critical nor historical, but constructive throughout. This method of construction through criticism is the one which I have instinctively followed in everything I have written. I do not claim that it is the best method; I simply desire that its nature be recognized!"<sup>23</sup>

This method makes for both strength and weakness in the resulting work. It results in "the nearest approach to a <sup>24</sup> Summa Philosophiae that any contemporary has given us" . But to the fact that the writer has never been under the necessity of bringing his views into systematic unity and exhibiting them as a coherent and self-consistent whole are perhaps due not a few of the apparent inconsistencies, the hiatuses in the argument, and the blurring of distinctions to which sympathetic critics have felt impelled to <sup>25</sup> call attention.

## II.

### The Substance of the Argument.

Bearing in mind the difficulties created for us by Professor Pringle-Pattison's method, we may attempt to summarise his position as he has given it in The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy. It will be recalled that only a portion of his discussion bears directly on the moral argument; but it will be fairest to his thought to give a digest of its development in its entirety.

### The Background of Recent Theism.

We may well make the beginning of our investigation into the idea of God in the thought of David Hume. The traditional ontological argument is rejected as unworthy

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23. The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy, p. vii.  
24. William Temple, in Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. I, p.  
25. See below, pp. 546ff.

of consideration. Hume's attention is centered entirely upon evidence of design in Nature. The presence of beauty, of purpose, of intention in Nature clearly indicate the existence of a Deity. But the co-presence of evil in Nature immediately forces the problem of his moral attributes. We can hardly take refuge in the conception of a Deity perfect in moral purpose but limited in power. Hume's net conclusion is that the ultimate cause of the universe probably bears some remote analogy to human intelligence but is quite indifferent to good and evil; and that, in any event, whatever we may be able to infer about God can have no practical consequences for human conduct. (Lecture I.)

The determinative influence in modern philosophy passed from Hume to Kant. Hume had erred in arguing solely from a study of Nature, to the neglect of evidence from human experience. It was precisely at this point--through an analysis of man's moral experience--that Kant grounded his certainty of God. To him the reality of 'absolute value' as revealed in the moral personality was fundamental. From it follow the fact of human freedom, the assurance of immortality and the certainty of God. Kant's weakness lay in the 'baldly hedonistic lines on which he rounded off his ethical theory', and the externalism and over-individualism of his theism through which 'God seems to be introduced in Kant's moral theory almost as an after-thought....in the merely administrative capacity of Paymaster.' But Kant at once gave to the



Idealism which succeeded him its keynote--'the conception of intrinsic value as the clue to the ultimate nature of reality'; and determined the battleground for the Nineteenth Century's central philosophical issue--'the relation of man and his human values or ideals to the universe in which he finds himself'. In that battle, the basic contention of Idealism should be that our fundamental judgements of value are essentially true; that they pertain to genuinely objective realities; and that the 'world of facts' must be interpreted in terms of the 'world of values' since it is manifestly unsound to interpret the higher by the lower. (Lecture II.)

Naturalism vs.  
Idealism.

Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century may be viewed as a duel between Idealism and Naturalism. The root of the conflict lay in Kant's vicious dualism of 'knowledge' and 'faith', and of 'phenomenal' and 'noumenal'. In the hands of more consistent thinkers, Kant's phenomenalism readily gave birth to Lange's materialism, to the agnosticism of Spencer and Huxley, to Lotze's heightened dualism, to Ritschl's dangerously sceptical distrust of philosophy, and to Mr. Balfour's anti-intellectualism. The only convincing rebuttal of Naturalism is to be made through a demonstration that Naturalism's interpretation of its own scientific data is unsound. This release from the strangle-hold of a false materialism was made initially possible through advance in biology. In the biological organism we confront a phenomenon for which physical and

chemical categories are hopelessly incompetent, which demands to be interpreted in terms of teleology and purpose. A sound reading of evolution, instead of thrusting man back into a materialistically conceived sub-strata, points to the higher forms of life and especially to intelligence as 'the event to which the whole creation moves'. Thus the 'lower Naturalism' which so minimized man's differentiation from non-human Nature as to amount, in effect, to a form of materialism must be supplanted by the 'higher Naturalism' which acknowledges a hierarchy of the sciences, each science handling a distinctive order of facts in Nature's advance and employing a distinctive set of categories appropriate to its data. 'Continuity of process and the emergence of real differences--these are the twin aspects of the cosmic history, and it is essential to clear thinking that the one be not allowed to obscure the other.' A new type or level of phenomena is seen to emerge 'under a convergence of appropriate conditions'; and the pretence of explaining the higher by reference to the lower is finally surrendered. Rather, 'every evolutionary process must be read in the light of its last term'. (Lectures III, IV, V.)

#### The Validity of Human Knowledge.

Such a rendering of the evolutionary process not merely delivers us from the shackles of materialism; it enables us to overpass Kant's unhappy dichotomies and to gain helpful light on the ever-troublesome problem



of knowledge. For man is organic to Nature and Nature is incomplete until it has flowered in man. 'The idea of nature as a completed system and of man as a spectator ab extra is essentially false.' Rather is man to be thought of as an organ through which 'the universe beholds and enjoys itself'. Therefore man's striving to comprehend correctly the world in which he finds himself should not be conceived as the effort of an external beholder to penetrate an essentially alien and obtuse substance, but rather as Nature's unfolding to a developing intelligence of the truth about herself. 'It all strikes one as a process of "communication" or of progressive revelation.' 'Things are as they reveal themselves in their fullness to the knowing mind.' 'However limited and imperfect our knowledge may be, it is still, so far as it goes, a knowledge of reality....The phenomenon is the noumenon so far as it has manifested itself, so far as we have grasped it in knowledge. In a strict sense, it is not really correct to say that we know phenomena: that is like saying twice over that we know. It is the noumena or real things that we know, and phenomena are what we know about them.'

Thus we are led to a view of knowledge which might be called Natural Realism. Unlike the older Natural Realism it admits no duality of substance between man and Nature, for man's mind lies at the heart of the reality which he desires to know. This view vindicates the objectivity

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26. The quotations in the foregoing paragraph will be found in the order of their use in The Idea of God, pp.211;111;155;130;163.

not only of the secondary qualities but of what may be called the 'tertiary qualities'--'the aspects of beauty and sublimity which we recognize in nature, and the finer spirit of sense revealed by the insight of the poet and the artist'<sup>27</sup>. Man's powers to apprehend both secondary and tertiary qualities could have developed only in response to the prior reality of the qualities apprehended. So, no less, with regard to the ethical and social insights which distinguish man as man.

"Man is, after all, the child of nature, and it is on the basis of natural impulses, and in commerce with the system of external things, that his ethical being is built up. Hence the characteristics of the ethical life must be taken as contributing to determine the nature of the system in which we live. According to the principle of value and the distinction between lower and higher ranges of experience, they should, indeed, carry us nearer to a true definition of the ultimate Life of which we are partakers than categories which suffice to describe, at most, the environmental conditions of human existence." 28

But if we are to view man's progressive comprehension of his world as, in another perspective, reality's self-revelation to him, then we are already face-to-face with God immanent in that process of self-disclosure. 'The nature of Reality is to be read in its manifestations, and may be read there truly. We may be sure the revelation is not exhaustive, for all revelation must be ad modum recipientis; it must be proportionate to the capacity of the receiving mind. Every advance in knowledge, or in goodness, or in the intuitions of beauty and grandeur offered us in nature or in art, is a further

27. The Idea of God, p.127.

28. Op.cit., p.213.



revelation of the heights and depths of the divine nature.' 'The Absolute is not unknown....;we read its nature in the system of its appearances. God as immanent--the divine as revealed in the structure and system of finite experience--this may be said to be....the outcome of the argument' thus far.<sup>29</sup>  
(Lectures VI-XI.)

Alternative  
Theories  
Rejected.

In the light of this position, the inadequacy of certain alternatives to a full theism is made clear. The agnosticism of the Religion of Humanity errs in severing man from Nature and failing to note that the loftiest human virtues which it would deify are born of the cosmic background which it abhors. The agnosticism of Spencer, on the other hand, which claims the ultimate reality to be forever unknowable, confuses the inherently unknowable with the 'not yet known, and doubtless never by us to be fully known, but still the ever to be better known'<sup>30</sup>. Pan-psychism and its pluralistic and pragmatistic variations can give no reasonable account of the origin or ultimate ground of its monadic units and involves more difficulties than it dispels. On the other hand Mentalism or Subjective Idealism which tends to deny the reality of the physical universe by positing existence as dependent upon being known is a perversion of a sound Idealism. The position to which our study points is that of an objective Idealism--an

29. The Idea of God, pp.175;215.

30. Op.cit., p.165.

interpretation of the world as finding its completion in self-conscious life, and of God as the Power increasingly made known in the process of the world's self-expression and self-realization.<sup>31</sup> (Lectures VII-X.)

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From Values to  
God.

'God as immanent' is our conclusion thus far, or 'the reality of appearances'. We must resist the tendency to stigmatise appearances as 'illusory' or 'unreal' and to set them in opposition to reality; our only knowledge of reality is through its appearances. On the other hand, not all appearances are of equal significance as revelatory of reality. A final interpretation must encompass 'the systematic structure of finite experience as a whole', and it will recognise degrees or levels of truth and reality. The criterion by which these levels are to be differentiated as 'higher' and 'lower' must be discovered in the nature of the system as a whole; each individual judgment of value must justify itself by demonstrating its harmony with this inclusive principle of value. (Lecture XI.)

Mr. Bradley has proposed a two-fold criterion of absolute value--inclusiveness and harmony. The Absolute is that which includes everything, and with complete harmony. As to what such an absolute experience would be like, we get only a vague suggestion through our own experiences of immediate intuition. Professor Bosanquet accepts essentially the same criterion of value. But

<sup>31</sup>. Professor Pringle-Pattison's own summary of the argument thus far is given in The Idea of God, pp. 207-216.



the proposed criterion is too formal and abstract. It first accepts such abstract tests as 'inclusiveness' and 'harmony' and then attempts to deduce the concrete character of the absolute experience therefrom. The sounder procedure will be just the reverse--from the concrete character of finite experience upward to a conception of the absolute experience formulated in essentially the same terms. In other words, it is in human experience at its highest and best that we must find suggestions as to the nature of the absolute experience, as to the character of God. It must be frankly recognised that behind this procedure is one unproven and unprovable assumption--'the conviction of the essential greatness of man and the infinite nature of the values revealed in his life'. It is an assumption underlying all forms of idealism, the supreme significance of rational life and the objectivity of man's values. But it is an assumption closely parallel to that which precedes all learning and all science--the final rationality of the world of facts. Each assumption in the last analysis is a venture of faith, but it is a reasonable faith; for each receives progressive verification in experience. This is the great conviction which the ontological argument tried clumsily to express--the best which we can think cannot surpass what actually is. (Lecture XII.)

Now when we press on and ask what is highest and best in human experience from which we may derive our insight into the character of God, we conclude that it

is man's ideals which are the creative forces shaping and lifting his life. These ideals are as real facts of human experience as any others. But, whence are they derived, how do they happen to have come to birth within the human soul? They can only have originated in a transcendent perfect Truth and Beauty and infinite Goodness; 'the presence of the Ideal is the reality of God within us'. This line of reasoning is really allied to the cosmological argument, from a known effect in the world to an adequate cause. But the cosmological argument usually reasoned from the physical universe to its transcendent Ground; this argument proceeds from the ideals which are such a vital element in human experience to their adequate Source. We have already met God immanent, progressively revealed in the upward advance of the cosmic history. But here we confront God transcendent, as the Perfection of all that man aspires to be and to realize, offering itself to the human soul as its inspiration and its goal. (Lectures XII and XIII.)

"The eternal contrast between the actual and the ideal seems to me to furnish the natural key to the problem of immanence and transcendence. Transcendence does not mean remoteness or aloofness. The distinction it points to is that between the perfect and the imperfect; and by perfection we do not understand the possession of innumerable unknown attributes, but the perfect realisation of those very values which we recognise as the glory and crown of our human nature... It is the immanence of the transcendent, the presence of the infinite in our finite lives, that alone explains the essential nature of man--the 'divine discontent' which is the root of all progress, the strange sense of doubleness in our being, the incessant conflict of the lower and the higher self.... And the more clearly we identify the call of the higher with our true self



the more unfeignedly do we recognise the illumination of the divine Spirit." 32

God and the  
Individual.

But if we are to find God most certainly through human aspiration at its highest, how shall we conceive the relation of the finite individual to the Absolute life? The individual is organic to society and, by the same token, to that larger environment from which the currents of inspiration and refreshment, of regeneration and redemption, course through it. The universe is best conceived as a 'vale of soul-making'. Nevertheless, we must guard against the tendency to deny real individuality, genuine autonomy, to finite selves. The true independence of men is as necessary for the life of the Absolute as it is for their own significance. For only so are they truly his 'creations'. These necessities are confirmed by the religious consciousness. For if the religious attitude is in the first instance one of 'dependence', it is only by virtue of a certain measure of independence that the dependence could be affirmed. And if the final religious action be self-surrender, it is the surrender of a genuinely free self, a surrender freely and voluntarily made. The ultimate Good constrains but it does not compel; it is the constraint of One who stands at the door of human life and knocks<sup>33</sup>. And if the perfection and fruition of finite experience comes through giving of self and finding of self in others, here once more is to be found a hint of the divine nature as 'a self-

32. "Immanence and Transcendence" in The Spirit, pp. 21-22.  
33. Cp. W. R. Sorley's similar suggestion; above, p. 111.

communicating life', and of the divine method of self-fulfillment through the creation and redemption of a world of individual spirits. (Lectures XIV and XV.) 34

God and the  
World.

We have spoken of 'creation' as a characteristic feature of the divine life; but it must not be conceived traditionally as an event at a definite date in the past. 'Creation must be regarded as an eternal act, an act grounded in the divine nature, and therefore....coeval with the divine existence'. 'God is cause only in the sense of ground'; for in Hegel's phrase, 'God is not more necessary to the world than the world to God'. Further, the method of creative activity is that of self-communication or self-impartation; and it assumes the necessity of a universe to which such self-manifestation can be made. 'The infinite in and through the finite, the finite in and through the infinite--this mutual implication is the ultimate fact of the universe as we know it. It is the eternal fashion of the cosmic life.' (Lecture XVI.)

The traditional conception of divine 'purpose' requires to be similarly reconstructed. It implies not an intention to accomplish an end against intransigent circumstance; but rather that reality is a significant whole. It is to view the whole in the light of an ultimate End. So to view the world in terms of Purpose or End is to interpret it in terms of Value; and thus to come upon the concepts of 'conation' and 'satisfaction'.

34. Cp. discussion, "Do Finite Individuals Possess a Substantive or an Adjectival Mode of Being?", in Life and Finite Individuality, pp. 103 ff.



without which we cannot conceive the realization of values. But although these are terms associated with finite experience, we should not hesitate to apply them in our thought of God. For we have all along agreed to find our conception of the Absolute through the highest human experience; and we may say that 'if the finite world means anything to God, the ideas of activity and purpose are indispensable'. (Lecture XVII.)<sup>35</sup>

# The Problem of Time.

But for the finite experient time is an essential feature of all experience, while the divine consciousness has traditionally been interpreted as embracing all eternity. The meaning of 'eternity' which may properly be used in this connection would seem to be that of an experience which 'includes time but somehow transcends it'. Two facts are included in such a definition. First, since all vital human activity and process depends upon the reality of the time-process, time as it is experienced by finite creatures must be comprehended within the divine understanding. But, on the other hand, the divine mind must also see all time as a whole. We get some foretaste of what such an eternal consciousness would be like in our occasional intuitions of a whole which, in fact, spans a considerable duration of time; further, the stress should fall not upon a comprehension of various temporal stages simultaneously, but upon the comprehension of various factors as elements in a completed whole. The analogy which will most aid our imagination is that of the author of a drama or story, who

<sup>35</sup>. Cp. "Immanence and Transcendence" in The Spirit, pp. 13ff  
Also Life and Finite Individuality, p. 119ff.

envisions the tale and all of its parts as a single unity but to whom the temporal development of the plot and the actions of the individual characters also have reality. This view is not without difficulties. But they arise largely, as in the thought of Bergson and James, from conceiving time spatially. 'The source of reality dwells neither in the past nor in the future. The three dimensions of Time....are rather our human ways of refracting the Eternal Nature in which we live and on which we draw.' Finite activity adds no real novelty to the Absolute; even moral progress which at first thought appears to create new values is recognised by the moral consciousness itself as merely bringing to realisation values already present in reality. Here, as elsewhere, the religious consciousness lends support to our conclusion in its conviction that progress is predicable only of the finite parts, but not of the whole. Likewise, the religious outlook gives the answer to pluralistic views which are usually motivated by determination to guard the independence of finite beings and the reality of the moral struggle. These perplexities have not troubled the saints; for them 'the victory for which morality fights is for religion already, or rather eternally, won; and it is the assurance of this victory which inspires the finite subject with courage and confidence in his individual struggle'. Such difficulties spring from an abstract conception of the Absolute as an All-knower; but for us he is 'a doer and sufferer



in the world's life'. (Lectures XVIII-XX.)

Conclusion.

Finally what answer can be given to that most troublesome question--how dare we trace a world so scarred by suffering, so defaced by wickedness, to the reason and will of a perfect Being as its sole explaining cause? We cannot seek a way of escape through dualism or the conception of a finite God. Most scepticism because of the facts of evil springs from one or the other of two misconceptions. It may be due to a false view of 'omnipotence' as sheer Power or Will. But the exercise of power must be within the limits prescribed by God's nature and purpose as moral. Or scepticism may arise from a falsely hedonistic ideal of human life. But 'effort, difficulty, hardship, pain, seem to be involved in any kind of moral world which we can conceive, or in any world which is really worth having; and the end of such a world would seem to be, by the operation of just such factors, "the making of souls"'. The confirmation of this interpretation of human life is to be found in such an experience as that of Romola who found the highest happiness so like pain that it could be distinguished only through the fact that our souls would choose it before anything else because they see it is good.

We come, then, at the end to summarise our conception of God. It is a conception which finds its supreme expression in the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation--

the story of a God 'who lives in the perpetual giving of himself, who shares the life of his finite creatures, bearing in and with them the whole burden of their finitude, their sinful wanderings and sorrows, and the suffering without which they cannot be made perfect'. The omnipotence upon which God relies is that of the atoning power of goodness and love. And 'for a metaphysic which has emancipated itself from physical categories, the ultimate conception of God is not that of a pre-existent Creator but, as it is for religion, that of the eternal Redeemer of the world'. (Lecture XX.)

### III.

#### The Position

We have tried to sketch in outline Professor Pringle-

Further Analysed. Pattison's theistic argument. Let us now consider more specifically his attitude on our four normative issues.

#### a. The Objectivi-

Of the discussion of the objectivity of values,

ty of Values. three comments may be briefly made:-

1) The issue is regarded as the central one of all modern thought. It was determined--determined unfortunately, Professor Pringle-Pattison thinks--by certain features of the Kantian philosophy. It precipitated the century-long duel between Naturalism and Idealism which, in turn, "bequeathed to us the peculiarly modern form in which the theistic problem, as the ultimate question of philosophy, presents itself to the modern mind"<sup>36</sup>.

2) A systematic argument for the objectivity of  
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36. The Idea of God, pp. 38-39.



values comparable to that which we have examined in the writings of Professors Sorley and Taylor is nowhere offered. Yet the certainty of their objective status is assumed throughout the discussion; indeed it is one of the two or three structural pillars of the whole position. The following would seem to be the considerations regarded as most convincing in proof of their objectivity:-

- a) The consciousness of values is an invariable feature of the highest human consciousness. As such, it is actually a constitutive factor in the total life of the world. 37
- b) The value-consciousness presents unanimous and universal testimony that it does not create values; it merely recognises and responds to them.

"In no sphere of our experience is the implication of objectivity--the 'truth-claim', as it has been called--more insistent, one might say, more overwhelming, than just in the moral and religious life... ..On the evidence of the moral and religious life, therefore, we are bound to treat the ideals of that life not as devout imaginations, in which fancy has combined with desire to heighten and idealize certain features of the actual, but as having their authentic basis in the nature of the world." 38

"Man does not make values any more than he makes reality. The soul, in Plato's metaphor, 'feeds upon' truth, upon goodness, upon beauty." 39

- c) Men find it morally impossible to believe that their values are not grounded in ultimate reality; this 'moral revulsion' is of a piece with their refusal to believe that the world is ultimately irrational.

"Familiar with values in our own experience, we feel it impossible to conceive anything devoid of value (such as an unconscious material system would be) as ultimately real or self-subsistent, in other words, as a whole, a res completa. It is this moral impossibility, I think, as much as the speculative contradiction of a world existing absolutely unknown, that is the driving-power of the idealistic argument....It is not so much an argument perhaps as an absolute conviction, but it is, I think, a con-

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38. The Idea of God, p.252.

39. Op.cit., p.239.

37. Cp. the similar argument of Sorley, above p.104.  
The Idea of God, p.244.

viction whose reasonableness is sustained by the unreasonableness of the opposite hypothesis." 40

"That our ideals themselves should perish, that nothing worth existing should have any pledge of continuance or growth, that the world of values, in short, should have no relation to the world of facts-- that is the one intolerable conclusion. And just because its intolerableness has nothing to do with any private hopes or fears, we feel that the refusal to entertain it is a judgement of objective validity, that it is, in short, of the same texture as the inability to believe an intellectual contradiction." 41

"It is the permanence of our ideals themselves, as expressing the eternal foundations of the world, which is the irreducible minimum of a reasonable faith and the irreducible minimum of the moral demand we make upon the universe." 42

- d) It is not merely our individual values which are objective; we confront a system of values, a realm of Ends, which makes an equally authentic claim on objectivity.

"Judgements of value are not to be taken, like the intuitions of an older philosophy, as so many detached and mutually independent pronouncements of one faculty or another upon particular features or aspects of the world. They represent rather so many parts of one fundamental judgement in which the nature of reality, as exhibited in the system, may be said to affirm itself. Every particular judgement depends for its ultimate sanction on the recognition of its object as a contributory element to this inclusive whole." 43

"The conditions of moral experience are as inexorable as any law of thought and no less founded in the nature of things." 44

"Here, then, we have a world of meanings, related or interconnected with one another, possessing a kind of reality different from the reality which we attribute to an existent thing or to an event that happens, but still a reality which we instinctively acknowledge, for 'we all feel certain in the moment in which we think any truth that we have not created it for the first time, but merely recognized it; it was valid before we thought of it, and will continue so without regard to any existence of whatever kind'." 45

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 40. The Idea of God, p.290.      41. Op.cit., p.45.  
 42. Life and Finite Individuality, p.112.  
 43. The Idea of God, p.223.      44. Op.cit., p.404.  
 45. Op.cit., p.345. The quotation is from Lotze, Logic, Part III, Cht.11.



- e) There is no way to account for the rise of the recognition of values within human consciousness save as the response to a prior and eliciting stimulus in the nature of things; our sense of values is as surely produced by an objective order of values as our sense-organs have developed in reaction to objective realities of form and color.

"There is no explanation possible of the evolution of the sense-organs unless we assume the reality of the new features of the world to which their evolution introduces us....And what is here claimed for the secondary qualities holds good also of the aspects of beauty and sublimity which we recognize in nature and those finer insights which we owe to the poet and the artist. These things ought not to be regarded as arbitrary fancies, subjective glosses upon nature's text--on the contrary, they give us a deeper truth than ordinary vision, just as the more developed eye or ear carries us farther into nature's beauties and refinements than the less perfect organs of a lower species....Man is, after all, the child of nature, and it is on the basis of natural impulses, and in commerce with the system of external things, that his ethical being is built up. Hence the characteristics of the ethical life must be taken as contributing to determine the nature of the system in which we live." 46

It will be evident at once how closely these points retrace ground with which we have become thoroughly familiar in the course of our earlier discussion. Although they are never given systematic presentation, most of the persuasive evidences of the objectivity of values find reflection in Professor Pringle-Pattison's thought at one or another point. Special attention should be directed to argument (c) above. It will be seen to stand quite apart from the others in character; it is an appeal to man's inmost conviction intuitively arrived at. This is the only point at which we are on definitely Kantian grounds. And here we make contact with the thought of Professor Baillie who, it will be remembered, placed reliance almost exclusively upon this

intuitive certainty for his assurance of the objectivity  
<sup>47</sup>  
of values. It is the fact which Professor Whitehead has  
in view when he reminds us so forcefully that it is the  
poets to whom we are indebted for our escape from the  
shackles of Nineteenth Century materialism, and that the  
poets, notably Wordsworth, were impelled to their rebellion  
not by "any intellectual antagonism" but by a "moral  
<sup>48</sup>  
repulsion" . Lastly we should note that the concluding  
consideration mentioned (e) is, in effect, a form of cosmo-  
logical argument and is so presented by Professor Pringle-  
<sup>49</sup>  
Pattison at another point in his discussion . This suggests  
our third comment.

3) Consideration of the objectivity of values tends  
at every point to pass into the broader issue of the ulti-  
mate interpretation of reality itself, of what we have per-  
sistently argued for as an "inclusive metaphysical view".  
In particular, while there is no explicit reference to the  
reasoning upon which we ourselves shall try to place con-  
<sup>50</sup>  
siderable weight --from the experience of values as the  
culmination of a cosmic development which has its beginnings  
in the physical universe, to the objectivity of these values--  
this point of view may be said to be presupposed throughout.  
Indeed we shall not fully grasp Professor Pringle-Patti-  
son's view of the matter unless we have constantly in mind  
his even more fundamental conviction on the relation of  
values to Nature.

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47. See above, pp. 248ff.

48. Science and the Modern World, p. 102. See below, p. 325ff.

49. The Idea of God, pp. 249 ff.

50. See below, pp. 368ff.



b. The Realm of Values and the Realm of Nature. Here, in the judgment of the present writer, we meet Professor Pringle-Pattison's powers at their very best; here he makes his most important single contribution toward the comprehensive rephrasing of the argument from values which we are seeking.

His attitude toward Nature is woven of two strands. In the first place, there is no minimization of the stark cruelty of Nature, her complete indifference to the race's highest concerns. But here it is the physical substructure of Nature which is always in view--the physical universe--although that fact is not always discriminated as it should be for the greatest clarity of thought.

"The moral indifference of nature, or, as Professor Huxley more strongly phrased it, 'the unfathomable injustice of the nature of things', is a problem as old as the Book of Job and older. Apart altogether from moral desert, what are we to make of the terrible contingencies of nature to which at every turn man is exposed--the agonies of the quivering flesh or the laceration of the spirit through his tenderest affections?" 51

"The kaleidoscopic transformations of external nature possess in themselves no trace of that intrinsic value which must belong to what Kant calls an end-in-itself. They are all summed up in Spencer's phrase, the redistribution of matter and motion; and, apart from conscious results which the process may condition, it is hard to see what interest lies for God or man in the infinite shiftings of the cosmic dust." 52

And, at the very end of the discussion, on the last page but one, we are brought back to face the same somber picture of the impersonal background of human existence.

"Contingency is written across the face of nature--not in the sense that what happens is not determined by natural law, but in the sense that it

appears to be only so determined, and cannot, in its detail, be brought within the scope of any rational or beneficent purpose. Contingency, casualty, or accident in this sense was frankly recognized by Plato and Aristotle, the great teleologists of the ancient world.... Nature is....an element, savage and dangerous, into which the human being is thrown to show what stuff he is made of." 53

This is the dark aspect of Nature's relation to the world of human values. But so gloomy an interpretation must be tempered in the light of facts hinted in a qualifying phrase in the second quotation--"apart from conscious results which the process may condition". Here is the transition to the second strand in the writer's view of Nature.

This other and dominant meaning of Nature for our values has appeared and reappeared so repeatedly in the course of the argument as a whole that <sup>it</sup> need hardly be more than mentioned here. Indeed it may properly be regarded as the foundation principle of Professor Pringle-Pattison's entire philosophy, and the  $\pi\alpha\rho\sigma\tau\omega$  for his constructive argument for God. It is the contention that, since man is organic to Nature, Nature herself can rightly be interpreted only in the light of her culmination in man. From this perspective Nature is seen as at once the mother and the nurse of human life and its values; she has brought man forth through the travail of her age-long exertion upward, and her impersonal discipline steels him to the achievement of the highest moral character.

It is attention to Nature's begetting of man which points a way of escape from Kant's unhappy legacy to modern thought. Release is won through a more acute analysis of



this very problem--the way in which the higher ranges of human experience are related to the groundplan of Nature. The answer is found in the 'higher Naturalism' which has already been described<sup>54</sup>. Nature, in the wider reference, exhibits a series of types or levels of reality. The lowest with which we are familiar is that which untutored usage most readily identifies with the 'phenomenal world'--the level of inorganic matter. Even here, a more discriminating study discovers a hierarchy of not one but several types of matter--the molecule being clearly differentiated from the atom, the crystal from simpler aggregations of molecules, etc. Above the level of the inorganic, we meet organic life; and here again a number of sub-levels in hierarchical advance may be more or less clearly distinguished. Then appears consciousness. Then reason. And--finally--the experience of values. (One further short step, though one which, I think, Professor Pringle-Pattison does not explicitly stress, shows that it is not only man but man's values which are organic to Nature, since they are, so to speak, 'organic to man' at the higher levels of man's life. And so their objectivity is further established.) It is a single organic progressive process from first to last, from the protons and electrons which lie at the basis of the structure of matter to the incarnation of the true, the lovely, the holy with which the life of spiritual beauty culminates. "Continuity of process and the emergence of real differences--these are, in short, the twin aspects of the<sup>55</sup>  
cosmic history." Students of recent biological theory

54. See above, p. 306.

55. The Idea of God, p. 103.

will at once recognise a variation of the interpretation of Nature known as 'Emergent Evolution' or 'Creative Evolution' although The Idea of God antedated Professor Lloyd Morgan's most influential presentation of the former  
 56  
 theory and does not refer to it by that name.

"After the first incomprehensibility of the nature of matter and force comes the origin of movement, then the origin of life and what appears to be purposive adaptation, then the origin of sentience, and finally the origin of rational consciousness and will. Each transition is one of the eternal 'limits' set to our knowledge of nature, in regard to which the confession of Science must be a perpetual 'Ignorabimus'." 57

"Man must be taken as organic to nature....The rational intelligence which characterizes him appears as the culmination of a continuous process of immanent development....The existence of such living centers capable of feeling the grandeur and beauty of the universe and tasting its manifold qualities is what is alone really significant in the universe. All values are in this sense conscious values; and so it is that the sentient, and, still more, the rational being appears as the goal toward which Nature is working, namely, the development of an organ by which she may become conscious of herself and enter into the joy of her own being." 58

Here then we are led to see Nature as, in an immediate though not in an ultimate sense, the source of the world of values. If she is the parent of man the valuer, she is also in some measure the unwitting tutor of his education toward spiritual maturity. For, once we see that the destiny of human life is to be conceived as the realisation of character rather than the conquest of happiness, Nature appears in a fresh perspective as an appropriate training-ground for that learning-experience. And we may now repeat the earlier pessimistic indictment of Nature but this time giving it

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 56. In Emergent Evolution and Life, Mind and Spirit.

57. The Idea of God, p.104. 58. Op.cit., pp.210-11; 6p.:--  
 "Spirit is the terminus ad quem of nature".(p.200).



its wider and truer setting.

"Nature may be regarded, on the large scale of history, as the instrument of man's moral and intellectual education; but this does not mean that we are bound to take each of nature's happenings as the exponent of a particular moral purpose....Contingency is written across the face of nature--not in the sense that what happens is not determined by natural law, but in the sense that it appears to be only so determined, and cannot, in its detail, be brought within the scope of any rational or beneficent purpose. Contingency, casualty, or accident in this sense was frankly recognized by Plato and Aristotle, the great teleologists of the ancient world. But whereas they treat it merely as hindrance and defect, does not further reflection show that just such a world is better fitted to be a nurse of what is greatest in human character than any carefully adjusted scheme of moral discipline? Nature is more than a training-school of the moral virtues in the specific sense; it is an element, savage and dangerous, into which the human being is thrown to show what stuff he is made of--an element testing with merciless severity his powers of courage and endurance, but drawing from him thereby the utmost of which he is capable." 59

Moral and Other  
Values.

Professor Pringle-Pattison's writings nowhere, so far as I have been able to discover, undertake a careful study of the relation of the different values to one another and of their relative importance. At only one or two points, which we shall have occasion to note in a moment, does he even suggest his own precise conviction on this much mooted issue. From a careful scrutiny of his thought we may, however, summarise his attitude as follows:-

1. His usual practice is to regard the three traditional ultimate values indifferently, sometimes instancing one, sometimes two, sometimes all three when the context seems to indicate that the argument in view would apply to any or all with equal appropriateness. "As in the quest of beauty, so in the life of moral endeavor." (60) In this regard, a parallel may be suggested to his tendency to employ the terms 'God', 'the Absolute' and 'nature' interchangeably and without careful discrimination. In this instance too there results something of the lack of clarity which has brought forth a storm of vigorous criticism in the parallel case.

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2. It is insisted that all three of the great values must be conceded ultimate significance. Against Kant's narrow moralism, it is protested, "The hackneyed triad of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good is sufficient to remind us that there are at least two other phases of experience to which it would be strange to deny an intrinsic value." (61) And again, adopting Plato's metaphor, "The soul 'feeds upon' truth, upon goodness, upon beauty." (62)
3. The case is strongly put for a system or scale of values; but it is not suggested that such a scale would classify the ultimate values in order of precedence, but rather distinguish values which are instrumental or definitely lower from all values which are intrinsic. (63)
4. Not infrequently the case is put, as though by preference, in terms of beauty and then transferred with appropriate comment to the credit of morality. An instance is the argument for the objectivity of values which has already claimed our attention; from the objectivity of the secondary qualities, the reasoning advances to substantiate the objectivity of "beauty and sublimity", and finally a further inference validates the objectivity of the ethical values. (64)
5. While the writer's choice most often falls upon beauty as the type of ultimate value through which he can most happily illustrate his point, the burden of the argument at its most serious and crucial turns falls almost invariably on the evidence from moral experience (supplemented not infrequently by distinctly religious experience). It is "man's nature as an ethical being" which is most acutely aware of its cleavage from the non-moral character of the world from which it springs. (65) It is "the characteristics of the ethical life" which are claimed to give us our nearest access to the nature of the ultimate Life. (66) It is "the conditions of moral experience" which exhibit a law of reality as inexorable as any law of thought. (67) Finally, it is the "moral impossibility" of believing in an ultimate reality entirely devoid of concern for values which furnishes the driving force for the whole idealistic conviction. (68)
6. The supremacy thus inferentially conceded to moral values at not a few places receives explicit affirmation in the author's only clear statement of his own relative 'weighting' of the values. Defending Kant's insistence upon the fundamental priority of morality,

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 62. The Idea of God, p. 31.  
 63. Op.cit., p. 219. Cp. p. 222.  
 65. Op.cit., p. 132.  
 67. Op.cit., p. 404.

62. Op.cit., p. 239.  
 64. Op.cit., p. 212. Cp. p. 243.  
 66. Op.cit., p. 213.  
 68. Op.cit., p. 200.

he goes on to say, partly in his own words and partly in quotation from Professor Bosanquet, "Even those who object most strongly to the too exclusive moralism of Kant's theory, admit that his error is excusable, in so far as we get, in morality and religion, 'the essential and fundamental conditions' of the perfect life, to which all other excellences--intellectual or artistic, for example--'are relatively posterior and dependent'. 'Morality', says Professor Bosanquet, 'can more nearly stand alone, and its absence shakes the whole foundations of life and mind. Such absence is in respect to life as a whole, what a failure of belief in the first principles of rational system is to intelligence.' We accept this justification of Kant's procedure." (69)

But we may add a further insight into Professor Pringle-Pattison's feeling in this matter of the significance of different types of value from his frequent and deliberate resort to poetry to bulwark the case he seeks to establish and to put it in the way most congenial to his own mind. Of this habit he has this to say:-

"It is possible that some readers may think that I have drawn too frequently upon the poets. That is perhaps a question of temperament. But my procedure was, at any rate, quite deliberate, for I accept Wordsworth's description of poetry as 'the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge', and I am even ready to be persuaded by Mr. Yeats that 'whatever of philosophy has been made poetry is alone permanent'." 70

In brief, Professor Pringle-Pattison follows the classical tradition in recognising three supreme values; for each of them he claims objective status and absolute worth; personal inclination leads him most frequently to turn to the evidence from beauty and the insights of the poets as supplementation to reasoned argument; but morality and religion [are held to] provide the more basic foundations of full life to which the values represented in intellectual and artistic interest are ancillary; all values are conceived as finding

69. The Idea of God, pp. 30-31. The quotations are from Bosanquet, The Principle of Individuality and Value, pp. 347-8.

70. The Idea of God, p. vii.



harmonious unity in an ultimate system with reference to which all specific judgments of value derive their authority.

# 1. The Problem of Evil.

We look to Professor Pringle-Pattison in vain for helpful light on the problem of evil. From the particular interest of this study, no other aspect of his thought is so inadequate and unconvincing. The extraordinary insight and ripe wisdom which we have discovered informing his discussions of other central topics seem to desert him here almost completely. One cannot resist the impression that this is an outcome, and perhaps the most unfortunate outcome, of his fealty to the absolutist tradition.

To begin with, there is no sufficient recognition of the sheer reality of evil and the distressing perplexities which it forces upon an earnest mind seeking a rational belief. To be sure, the indifference of physical nature and its gift of suffering to human life are granted from the outset; the disposition made of these difficulties we have  
71  
already noted. But, this aspect of evil aside, the larger problem receives hardly so much as a passing reference until the argument is almost at its close; it is not an overstatement that the general discussion advances in almost complete disregard of the matter. At the very end we are brought sharp against the issue:- "But this world of ours, so scarred by suffering, so defaced by wickedness, so entangled, as it often seems, in the meshes of a non-rational contingency-- how dare we trace such a world to the reason and will of a

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71. See above, p. 324ff.

perfect Being as its sole explaining cause?" Here is promise of a vigorous grappling with the problem at last. But the fulfillment of the promise is most disappointing. The alternative solutions of Pluralism and of a finite God are both immediately rejected as untenable. It is suggested that difficulties over the facts of evil arise from faulty thinking at one of two points--either from a misconception of the meaning of omnipotence or from an unworthy ideal for human living. Omnipotence does not mean unqualified employment of unlimited power; God's exercise of will must be within the limits imposed by his nature as moral and the inexorable conditions of the moral law. On the other hand, the highest purpose for life is not to secure happiness but to achieve character; the true end of our world is "the making of souls" and it is an appropriate medium for that purpose. Now obviously these two observations are sound, and they are important prolegomena to any thorough wrestling with the perplexities of evil. But to imply that all men's doubts can be accounted for in terms of two such obvious and naive misconceptions is to impugn both the intellectual capacity and the genuine earnestness of the doubters. As a matter of fact these two explanations do not touch the fringes of the really harrowing features of evil's impact; they leave off precisely at the point where most men's difficulties begin. The real task is to explain why, within an omnipotence in which there power is assumed forever under the restraint of goodness and purpose, there should occur so much which appears without purpose or good fruitage, so



much which suggests the unrestrained handiwork of sheer power. And, on the other hand, the difficulty from the human side is not that life should fail to give happiness; but that it should bring so much suffering--for example, insanity, inherited feeble-mindedness, etc.--which nothing, not even the religious consciousness at its highest, seems competent to transmute into good. In the face of such questions as these, Professor Pringle-Pattison's hasty treatment must appear, at the very least, superficial. It is matter of regret that a theistic argument otherwise so carefully and persuasively reasoned should suffer such severe anti-climax on the most crucial difficulty every theist must attempt to dispel. We are again driven to the suggestion that it is the writer's legacy from an Absolute Idealism which forever holds its vision partially closed against the bitter realities of life.

Moral Values and  
Religious Experience.

An added word on the writer's view of the significance of distinctively religious experience may not be out of place at this point. We suggested earlier that this is one of the features of Professor Pringle-Pattison's theism which most commends it to our study. It is probable that he would welcome the description of his book as a theism in the light of religious experience; it is indeed an argument from religion rather more than an argument from morality. Most frequently the two terms are linked; the usual reference is to "the moral and religious life" <sup>73</sup>. Morality is regarded as more indissolubly connected with religion than with either of the other great areas of <sup>73</sup>. See, for example, The Idea of God, pp. 252; 382; etc.

intrinsic value. But it is to the religious consciousness even more than to moral experience that final appeal is made, both for substantiation of the conclusions previously arrived at and, more significant, for light where reasoning unaided by spiritual insight gives no light. It is the religious consciousness which furnishes an assured sense of a Divine Companion "whose perfect comprehension is the pledge of a sympathy as perfect, a sympathy to which we appeal with confidence even where we might hesitate in regard to those nearest to us and most dear"<sup>74</sup>. It is the religious consciousness which is able to arbitrate for us the puzzling dilemma of the relation of finite selves to the Absolute, assuring us that only genuinely independent human spirits can recognise the dependence, make the surrender and achieve the attitudes of worship and adoration which characterise the religious life.<sup>75</sup> Again it is the religious consciousness which, while it may claim genuine progress for ourselves, testifies that to the Divine Life there can be no real novelty, no intrinsic growth or progress.<sup>76</sup> Lastly, if there be granted to us any light on the facts of evil (beyond the feeble suggestions whose inadequacy we have just found it necessary to regret) it would seem to come alone through religion. Here, in truth, would appear to be Professor Pringle-Pattison's most promising answer to evil's mystery. For to the contingency written across the face of Nature which we have twice portrayed<sup>77</sup>, the religious attitude makes a distinctive response:-

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 74. The Idea of God, p. 269.

76. Op.cit., p. 383.

75. Op.cit., pp. 290-1.

77. See above, pp. 323 & 327.



"The religious man will, no doubt, seek to accept whatever happens to him as from the hand of God, and by doing so he will make this account of the occurrence true, because he thereby transmutes the event into an instrument of spiritual growth." 78

And thereby, the religious consciousness discovers both the profoundest meaning of human life and the final truth regarding the divine nature itself.

"No deeper foundation of Idealism can be laid than the perception....of the spirit's power to transform the very meaning of the past and to transmute every loss into gain, 'finding even in the worst of tragedies the means of an otherwise impossible triumph', a triumph which but for that wrong or treason had never been. This is the real omnipotence of atoning love, unweariedly creating good out of evil; and it is no far-off theological mystery but, God be thanked, the very texture of our human experience." 79

Our examination of Professor Sorley's thought discovered his argument from moral values pointing beyond morality to the religious consciousness but we found his position somewhat deficient because the further step into a philosophy of religious experience is indicated but it is nowhere taken.<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, we criticised Professor Baillie for a too exclusive emphasis upon the religious attitude of faith grounded in moral experience.<sup>81</sup> Here both deficiencies are made good. We are presented with a theism based upon a broad philosophy of values--a rendering of values in which all ultimate values are significant guide-posts to the divine, but in which a supreme importance attaches to moral experience; a philosophy of values, finally, in which the deeper and most vital insights and the ultimate assurances are made known only through the distinctive experience of religion.

78. The Idea of God, p. 415.

79. Op.cit., p. 417.

80. See above, p. 130

81. See above, p. p. 285ff.

## IV.

The Theistic Arguments.

We have cited Professor Pringle-Pattison's theism as an instance of an "inclusive metaphysical view". Justification for that designation may be discovered in the fact that all of the traditional arguments for God, though in modified presentation, are embodied in it.

The Ontological Argument represents man's ineradicable conviction of the trustworthiness of careful and competent thought--the conviction that the conclusions to which human reason has been led by a process of criticised and self-consistent induction must correspond with reality; in another reference, the conviction that the best which the human mind can conceive must represent reality. This argument has usually been employed to vindicate the ontological status of the principles of logic; but it may properly be extended to validate the objectivity of the carefully reasoned conclusions of the moral faculty, since they, like the processes of thought, represent the outcome of the highest exercise of man's native faculties.

"This fundamental confidence of reason in itself is just what the ontological argument is really labouring to express--the confidence, namely, that thought, when made consistent with itself, is true, that necessary implications in thought expresses a similar implication in reality. In this large sense, the truthfulness of thought--its ultimate truthfulness--is certainly the presupposition of all thinking: otherwise there would be no inducement to indulge in the operation.

"Fundamentally, it is the conviction that 'the best we think, or can think, must be'--a form of statement which perhaps enables us to see the real intention of the old scholastic argument that 'a perfect being necessarily exists'. In other words, the possibi-



lities of thought cannot exceed the actuality of being; our conceptions of the ideal in their highest range are to be taken as pointing to a real Perfection, in which is united all that, and more than, it has entered into the heart of man to conceive." 82

The Cosmological Argument in its ordinary form is the argument from known effects in the empirical world to an adequate cause. Usually it has been applied to the necessary dependence of a finite and imperfect world upon an infinite and perfect Reality; or, as in Locke, from man's knowledge of his own existence as a real but finite creature to the existence of a necessary and eternal Being. But here, likewise, the scope and setting of the argument may be broadened by its application to the reality of man's values without altering its essential structure or validity. As has already been argued in connection with the objectivity of values, there is no way to explain the rise of the consciousness of ideals within our human existence unless they have been inspired there by an objective and ultimate Perfection. This is a restatement, in terms more congenial to modern ways of thinking, of the argument which Descartes introduced into modern philosophy.

"Whence, then, are these ideals derived and what is the meaning of their presence in the human soul? Whence does Man possess this outlook upon a perfect Truth and Beauty and an infinite Goodness, the world of empirical fact being, as Bacon says, in proportion inferior to the soul? Man did not weave them out of nothing any more than he brought himself into being. 'It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves'; and from the same fontal Reality must be derived those ideals which are the masterlight of all our seeing, the element, in particular, of our moral and religious life. The presence of the Ideal is the reality of God within us." 83

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82. The Idea of God, pp. 240-241.

83. Op.cit., p. 246. Cp.op.cit., pp. 212-213, quoted above, p. 321:

The Teleological Argument expresses man's impression that the world as he meets it represents the expression of a transcendent and divine Purpose. It is not possible for us, as for traditional exponents of the argument, to conceive of an external and contingent design which is being superinduced upon a world in some sense refractory and alien to that purpose. But we are forced to recognise that our universe exhibits a systematic and intelligible unity; further, that within the conditions of this structure there is apparent a process which can only be rightly interpreted in terms of the direction toward which it points. The unity, in other words, is a whole involving the progressive realization of an immanent Purpose; and this is the essential meaning of a teleological world.

"A teleological view of the universe means the belief that reality is a significant whole.

"Rationality is not a lucky accident; it is the fundamental feature of the world. Intelligibility, as we actually discover it, and as we everywhere presume it, means that the world is the expression or embodiment of thought. In this sense mens agitat molem; reason is present at every stage as the shaping spirit of the whole.

"In the interpretation of any process, it is the process as a whole that has to be considered, if we wish to know the nature of the reality revealed in it. In other words, every evolutionary process must be read in the light of its last term.

"To proclaim the End as the true principle of explanation is no more than to insist.... that the True is the Whole.... The last term is only important because in it is most fully revealed the nature of the principle which is present throughout. It is precisely this linkage of the first term with the last and, to that extent, the transcendence of the mere time-sequence in the conception of an eternal reality, that seems to me to be expressed by the profound Aristotelian idea of *τέλος* or End." 84

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But, as we remarked at the outset, the major stress in Professor Pringle-Pattison's philosophy falls upon the Argument from Values. Indeed it becomes a center of reference for the older traditional arguments, affording a principle of unity in their interpretation. It is his consciousness of value-ideals which leads man to postulate an ontologically real ultimate and perfect Ground of values. It is the imperious command of values upon his <sup>(reluctant)</sup> allegiance which requires causal explanation in terms of a trans-human Source of values. It is the emergence of the awareness of values and himself as 'valuer' in the late stages of the cosmic history which justifies a teleological interpretation of the world, a recognition of the immanent outworking of the Purpose of God.

In so far as the ethical consciousness is to be distinguished from the awareness of values in general for special attention, it leads to the distinctively Moral Argument. In correction of Kant's too individualistic and external formulation, this argument may be stated as follows:-

"It is upon the attitude of the moral man himself that the moral philosopher should base his theory.... The real postulate or implied presupposition of ethical action is simply that we are not acting in a world which nullifies our efforts, but that morality expresses a fundamental aspect of reality, so that in our doings and strivings we may be said, in a large sense, to have the universe somehow behind us. Moral action, in short, implies <sup>the</sup> belief in a moral order, just as deliberate action of any sort implies belief in the orderly connectedness of physical nature." 85

"Consciousness of imperfection, the capacity for progress, and the pursuit of perfection, are alike possible to man only through the universal life of thought and goodness in which he shares, and which, at once an

indwelling presence and an unattainable ideal, draws him 'on and always on'." (86) "The authority claimed by what is commonly called the higher self is thus only intelligible if the ideals of that self are recognized as the immediate presence within us of a Spirit leading us into all truth and goodness." 87

Here, in the second paragraph, we see the argument from morality passing naturally and inevitably into the causal argument. And we see it pointing to God in both his immanent and his transcendent aspects, at once 'an indwelling presence' and 'an unattainable ideal' <sup>88</sup> .

But, lastly, it should be clearly recognised that none of these four familiar lines of reasoning nor indeed all of them together furnishes absolute proof, unchallengeable certainty, of the divine existence. The ontological argument, at best, encourages us to believe that we are not self-deceived in our confidence that ultimate reality will be discovered to be as perfect as our highest imaginative conception of it; but that is a far remove from absolute proof. To be sure that confidence is and should be the presupposition of all our highest activity, just as confidence in the rationality of the world is the necessary 'presupposition of all our thinking'; but to the end each remains a 'practical assumption' <sup>89</sup> . Likewise, the causal argument must confront Hume's familiar rejoinder that it carries us only to belief in a transcendent reality of 'sufficient power

86. The Philosophical Radicals and Other Essays, p. 98

87. The Idea of God, p. 37.

88. Cp. Whitehead's definition of religion as "the vision of something which stands beyond, behind and within the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, yet waiting to be realized; something which is a ~~remote possibility and yet the greatest of present~~ ~~fact~~ ~~possibility~~ ~~and yet the greatest of present~~

89. The Idea of God, p. 240. ~~Science & the Modern World~~, p. 238.



and sufficient intelligence to account for the tangled web of empirical fact'; not to the certainty of a perfect <sup>90</sup> absolute Reality. And the teleological argument however skillfully freed from externalism and formalism never succeeds in fully justifying to human reason the pressing facts of dysteleology and apparently purposeless waste in Nature (facts which, unfortunately, escape Professor Pringle-Pattison's attention almost altogether). Again, the central argument from values is admitted to proceed from an inherently unprovable assumption 'of the essential greatness of man and the infinite nature of the values revealed in his <sup>91</sup> life'. In particular, morality does not establish the fact of God; it acts as though God were. The fact is always <sup>92</sup> the 'postulate or implied presupposition of ethical action'. In brief, theism at each point of its supporting evidence rests finally upon an act of faith, but a reasonable faith--a faith progressively vindicated by experience. I hope I shall not offend Professor Pringle-Pattison's thought if I suggest that this final appeal is to an essentially Pragmatic Argument. Speaking of the measure of certainty which the evidence from values affords, it is said:-

"A few words more may be added as to the nature of the assurance with which we hold our position. The logical principle of non-contradiction, or, to express it more largely, the principle of intellectual coherence, we must and do accept as absolute. We accept it as a necessity of reason involved in the possibility of knowing anything--involved therefore in all practical living as well as in the immovable belief in law and order which inspires all scientific investigation. And, needless to say, life and science alike vindicate the principle; all experience may be looked

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90. The Idea of God, pp. 249-250.

91. Op.cit., p. 236.

92. Op.cit., p. 35.

upon as its progressive verification. But if we ask what is the nature of our certainty that existence, the world of facts, is ultimately and throughout intellectually coherent--that we have to do, in short, not with a chaos but with a cosmos, a world whose laws may be infinitely complex and difficult to unravel, but which will never put us to permanent intellectual confusion--we are bound to reply that in a sense it is an unproved belief. It is unproved in the sense that we have not explored the whole of existence, and in the nature of the case can never hope to include all the facts within the net of reason. And hence it may perhaps be called a postulate of reason, a supreme hypothesis. Many would describe it as a 'venture of faith'." 93

Then, after showing that in a similar fashion our ideals tend to create the conviction that ultimate reality must correspond with them also, the argument continues:-

"Admittedly, however, such a conception transcends the empirical reality of man's own nature or of the factual world around him, just as the perfectly coherent intellectual whole transcends the achieved results of knowledge. And, so far, the argument seems parallel in the two cases; in both there is an aspect of faith, and in both a similar claim to objectivity. But it is idle to deny that, although the belief in ultimate Goodness and Perfection at the heart of things may be held with a more passionate energy of conviction than the more colourless postulate of the intellect, it does not present itself to most minds with the same impersonal logical cogency. 'The ultimate identity of value and existence' has been described as the great venture of faith to which mysticism and speculative idealism are committed."

But, "whatever aspect of faith may cling to a philosophical conclusion, it must be presented as the conclusion of the reason upon a consideration of all the evidence and after due weight assigned to all the modes of our experience. It must be a reasonable faith." 94

And of the attitude which is required for such a steady assurance of the reality of God, we are reminded:-

"Faith, which is an active belief in the reality of the ideal, is the very breath by which humanity lives, and it will reconstitute itself afresh as long as the race endures." 95

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93. The Idea of God, p.239.

95. Op.cit., p.82.

94. Op.cit., pp.241-2. The citation Mascara, 1923, Inge in The Times Literary Supplement.



## V.

The Conception  
of God.

What, then, is the Idea of God to which we have been led? Here we shall allow Professor Pringle-Pattison to speak in his own words, bringing together some half dozen of the more important statements out of the many more passages from which his full-orbed conception of God is to be discovered.

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"Of the Absolute it has been finely said, 'its predicates are the worlds'. We learn its nature through the facts of the universe, especially so far as any system or scale of values is discernible in them. This is the immanent God.... The nature of ultimate Reality is to be read in its manifestations, and may be read there truly." 97

"All experience might not unfitly be described, from the human side, as the quest of God--the progressive attempt, through living and knowing, to reach a true conception of the Power whose nature is revealed in all that is.... Man is the visible presence of the divine. We are far too apt to limit and mechanize the great doctrine of the Incarnation which forms the centre of the Christian faith. Whatever else it may mean, it means at least this--that in the conditions of the highest human life we have access, as nowhere else, to the inmost nature of the divine. 'God manifest in the flesh' is a more profound philosophical truth than the loftiest flight of speculation that outsoars all predicates and, for the greater glory of God, declares him unknowable." 98

"The existence of finite centres is a fact as true and important 'from the side of the Absolute' as from the point of view of the finite beings themselves--nay, this differentiation or creation constitutes the very essence and open secret of the Absolute Life....

"Although the individual may not make himself his own End, the world of finite individuals may well constitute the End of the Absolute. How can we ascribe to the Absolute, as many theologians have done, the self-centred life, the contemplation of His own glory, which spells moral death in the creature? Is it reasonable to deny of the fontal life of God that giving of Himself and finding of Himself in others, which we recognize as the perfection and fruition of human life?

"The divine life is essentially a process of self-communication. Or, to put it in more abstract philosophical language, the infinite in and through the finite, the

96. In addition to the sections quoted, see Idea of God, pp. 215; 238; 246; 254; 269; 382; 430-435; etc; etc.

97. The Idea of God, pp. 174-5. 98. Op.cit., pp. 156-7.



finite in and through the infinite--this mutual implication is the ultimate fact of the universe as we know it. It is the eternal fashion of the cosmic Life." 99

"God becomes an abstraction if separated from the universe of his manifestation, just as the finite subjects have no independent subsistence outside of the universal Life which mediates itself to them in a world of objects. We may conceive God as an experience in which the universe is felt and apprehended as an ultimately harmonious whole; and we must, of course, distinguish between such an infinite experience and the experiences of ourselves and other finite persons. But we have no right to treat either out of relation to the other. We have no right to suppose the possibility of such an infinite experience as a solitary monad--an absolute, in the old sense of the old term already condemned, self-sufficient and entirely independent of the finite intelligences to whom, in the actual world which we know, it freely communicates itself.... The notion of God is inseparable from that of a spiritual community.

"But so long as we apply the terms infinite and perfect to God.... such a view is misrepresented by phrases which seem to make God one individual mind among a number of equally self-subsistent individuals.... However impious and intolerable one may feel the image of the potter and the clay, however certain one may be that the integrity of the self-conscious being is involved in the very perfection of the divine nature, still the relation between the finite spirit and its inspiring source must be, in the end, incapable of statement in terms of the relation of one finite individual to another. To treat God as no more than primus inter pares is to lose touch both with speculation and religion." 100

"God is not a causa remota, who created a universe once upon a time. He is its ever-present sustaining ground. The universe of the finite and everything in it exists from one moment to another only because He perpetually creates it.... Creation is an eternal act, which means that God never existed without a world in which He was manifested.....

"God is cause only in the sense of ground, that is to say, the Being whose nature is expressed in the system as a whole.... God exists as creatively realizing himself in the world, just as the true Infinite is not a mere Beyond, but is present in the finite as its sustaining and including life." 101

"By the existence of the personality of God we do not mean the existence of a self-consciousness so conceived. We mean that the universe is to be thought of, in the last resort, as an Experience and not as an abstract

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 99. The Idea of God, pp. 277; 294-5; 315. Cp. Hegelianism & Personality, pp. 215ff.  
 100. Op.cit., pp. 314; 320. Cp. Life and Finite Individuality, pp. 119ff.  
 101. The Spirit, pp. 13:15: The Idea of God, pp. 302, 312



content--an experience not limited to the intermittent and fragmentary glimpses of this and the other finite consciousness, but resuming the whole life of the world in a fashion which is necessarily incomprehensible save by the Absolute itself.... We call God personal because in personality is revealed the highest we know, and it is better, therefore, to affirm personality than to call the Absolute impersonal. The epithet, like the statements of the creeds, is the denial of an error rather than a definitely articulated affirmation of ascertained fact. And if the affirmation of personality were taken to imply identity of conditions, then, but for its tendency to become a merely empty name, supra-personal would obviously more appropriately express our meaning." 102

"It is a great misfortune that 'the spirit of God', the influence of God in the human soul...., the mystic presence of the Lord in the hearts of His followers, a spirit of comfort and consolation in their loss, revealing the mind of the Master whom on earth they had often so ill understood, and so guiding them and the Church after them into all truth--it is a misfortune that expressions like these, and the spiritual fact for which they stand, should have been materialised so as to suggest the existence of a third personality or agency distinct from both the Father and the Son. For what better word could be found to express just the fact of divine immanence on which the possibility of communion with God is based, the illuminative presence of God operative in every soul which he has created? The conception of the Spirit is, in fact, the final and complete account of the one God as the Father of spirits, their Creator, Inspirer, and Redeemer." 103

"Truth, Beauty, Goodness have no reality as self-existent abstractions; they have no meaning apart from conscious experience. They carry us therefore to a primal Mind in whose experience they are eternally realized. God himself is at once the supreme Reality and, as Dante calls him, the supreme Value--il primo, il summo Valore. And the highest conception we can form of perfect personality is Love, not in any shallow sentimental sense, but the self-giving Love which expends itself for others, and lives in all their joys and sorrows. Such love, then, the principle of our argument bids us take as the ultimate value of which the universe is the manifestation. It bids us conceive the inmost being of God not solely as the realization of eternal Truth and the enjoyment of perfect Beauty, but pre-eminently as the exercise and fruition of his nature as Love." 104

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102. The Idea of God, p.390 (the second part of the quotation is taken from the footnote on the same page).
103. The Spirit, p.11. See, also, the fuller quotation on Transcendence and Immanence, p.312 above.
104. The Idea of Immortality, p.190.

"What was the secret of Christianity, the new interpretation of life by which it conquered the world? The answer is in a sense a commonplace. It was the lesson of self-sacrifice, of life for others, precisely through which, nevertheless, the truest and intensest realization of the self was to be attained--in the Pauline phrase, dying to live, in the words of Jesus, losing one's life to find it.... This conception of the meaning of life embodied in One who spoke of Himself as being among men as one that serveth, this was the victory which overcame the world. It is the final abandonment of the hedonistic ideal, through the recognition of the inherent emptiness of the self-centered life.... And here the bearing of the change upon our argument becomes apparent.

"For if this is the deepest insight into human life, must we not also recognize it as the open secret of the universe? That is the conclusion to which we have been led: no God, or Absolute, existing in solitary bliss and perfection, but a God who lives in the perpetual giving of himself, who shares the life of his finite creatures, bearing in and with them the whole burden of their finitude, their sinful wanderings and sorrows, and the suffering without which they cannot be made perfect.... The divine omnipotence consists in the all-compelling power of goodness and love to enlighten the grossest darkness and to melt the hardest heart. 'We needs must love the highest when we see it;' It is of the essence of the divine prerogative to seek no other means of triumph--as, indeed, a real triumph is possible on no other terms. And thus, for a metaphysic which has emancipated itself from physical categories, the ultimate conception of God is not that of a pre-existent Creator but, as it is for religion, that of the Eternal Redeemer of the World. This perpetual process is the very life of God, in which, besides the effort and the pain, He tastes, we must believe, the joy of victory won." 105

## VI.

### Criticism.

Our comment upon Professor Pringle-Pattison's discussion has been almost altogether favorable. From this it should not be inferred that his thought is wholly free from serious limitations; and these inadequacies necessarily infect his idea of God and in some measure detract from its value. We have not given them extended notice because they fall almost entirely outside the lines of the principal



interests of this paper. They have been reviewed in a series of sympathetic and appreciative but none-the-less vigorous critical notices.<sup>106</sup> The criticisms which have been most frequently urged are these:-

1. A confusion in the use of the terms 'God', 'the Absolute', 'Nature', 'the All'.
2. A failure to establish genuine transcendence for God; or, from another angle, a too intimate identification of God with the world.
3. A merging of finite personalities in the nature of the Absolute in such a way that their genuine individuality is compromised.
4. An inadequate view of 'time', which tends to deny the reality of the time-process and consequently to minimize the significance of history.

To these we would wish to add a fifth:-

5. A superficial treatment of the problem of evil.

Our own conclusion would be that each of the five criticisms is justified by certain strains in Professor Pringle-Pattison's thought, though not by what we should like to regard as the dominant and coherent tenor of his teaching. It would be our further suggestion that, in each case, the unsatisfactory strain of argument is a direct heritage from the Hegelian Idealism which has never been fully criticised in the light of the writer's main position; and that it is finally inconsistent with the more realistic and thoroughly Christian type of Idealism which we believe to be the most fundamental, as it certainly is the most attractive, current of the author's conviction.

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106. See, especially:- Charles Gore, Belief in God, pp. 65; 69-73; H.R. Mackintosh, "A Philosopher's Theology" in Contemporary Review, December 1917, and in Some Aspects of Christian Belief, pp. 259ff; William Temple in Contemporary British Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 415f; H. Rashdall in Mind, July 1918, pp. 261ff; B. Bosanquet in Mind, 1917, pp. 474ff; C.A. Richardson in Mind, January 1919.

Professor Pringle-Pattison's discussion of the  
 107  
 problem of evil has already been considered. A very  
 brief comment on each of the four other points of cri-  
 ticism will suffice.

God and the  
 Absolute.

1. The confusion resulting from Professor Pringle-Pattison's identification of the terms 'God', 'the Absolute', 'Nature' and 'the All' has been remarked by most of his critics. His nomenclature and its deficiencies in this particular have been subjected to thorough and acute analysis by Professor Mackintosh in his friendly note in the Contem-  
 108  
porary Review --perhaps the most considerate and discriminating examination which The Idea of God has received. By a careful collation of passages, it is shown that throughout most of the volume the four alternative terms are used  
 109  
 indifferently as though exact equivalents. In a rejoinder appended to the second edition of The Idea of God, Professor Pringle-Pattison justifies his usage by pointing out that his argument is progressive in character and, as it proceeds,  
 110  
 employs its terms with increasing exactitude. But this explanation hardly satisfies the objection since one of the most perplexing equations of 'the Absolute' and 'the All' occurs in the last lecture but one.  
 111  
 In any event it is clear that in no proper theistic usage could 'God' be identified with either 'Nature' or 'the All'; and the equation

107. See above, pp. 330ff.

108. December 1917, reprinted in Some Aspects of Christian Belief, pp. 259ff.

109. Op.cit., pp. 263ff. Cp. Prof. Bosanquet: "The author seems to recognise no distinction between God and the Absolute" in Mind, 1917, p. 478; and Dean Rashdall: "The Absolute is God", Spirit, when he calls indifferently in Mind, 1918, p. 263.

110. The Idea of God, p. 431.

111. Op.cit., p. 366.



of 'God' and 'the Absolute', although familiar in idealistic thinkers, is fraught with only slightly less difficulty. The Absolute, in Professor Pringle-Pattison's most carefully considered definition, is "a self-contained and internally organised whole, beyond which there is nothing"<sup>112</sup>. But if the independence of finite spirits is of such a kind that they may enter into fellowship with God voluntarily--indeed, by the inherent character of the relationship, cannot be linked in fellowship with him in any other way<sup>113</sup>--, then it should be clear that God is not identical with the Absolute as just defined. And there is the added difficulty of recognising the reality of evil in a world which is held to be contained within a perfect Absolute 'beyond which there is nothing'. These are, of course, hackneyed objections; they have been urged by Dean Rashdall and answered by Professor Pringle-Pattison in a joint discussion in Mind<sup>114</sup>; but the critic appears to us to have the better of the controversy. The sum of the matter would seem to urge a clear discrimination between God and the Absolute, reserving the term 'God' for that 'self-communicating Life' who forever stands at the door of human life and knocks but will not enter save at human invitation<sup>115</sup>; while employing 'the Absolute' in that wider reference as including 'God-and-the-World', a usage which is said exactly to express the writer's meaning<sup>115</sup>.

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112. The Idea of God, p.432.

113. Op.cit., p.292.

114. H.Rashdall, "The Religious Philosophy of Professor Pringle-Pattison", in Mind, July 1918; and A.S.Pringle-Pattison, "The Idea of God: A Reply to Some Criticisms", in Mind, January 1919, p.1ff.

115. The Idea of God, p.433.

Transcendence  
and Immanence;  
God and the  
World.

2. Bishop Gore's principal dissatisfaction with Professor Pringle-Pattison's theism is that his careful inductive argument which, however, refuses to recognise any unique divine revelation never carries us to the reality of a transcendent Deity existing in independence<sup>116</sup> of the world. And Archbishop Temple is confused by a similar ambiguity as to whether God is to be taken as "the Supreme Reality in whom all existences find the ground of their being" or merely as "the sum total or perfection of adjectival values"<sup>117</sup>. We should be inclined to assent to these criticisms though on slightly different grounds. Here again, thorough consideration of the matter would traverse old and familiar territory which is somewhat beyond our proper purview. The crux of the issue concerns God's relation to the world--whether and in what sense God is to be thought of as existing either prior to, or independent of, his creation. Professor Pringle-Pattison seeks to overpass the first half of the difficulty--God's priority to the world--by a doctrine of time which is, to say the least, difficult.<sup>118</sup> On the second part of the issue--God's independence of his creation--he is emphatic. "God never existed without a world in which He was manifested"<sup>119</sup>; "God is not more necessary to the world, says Hegel, than the world to God. Without the world, God were not God"<sup>120</sup>. An initial confusion disappears when it is clearly recognised that it is not really our world, this universe as we know it, which

116. Charles Gore, Belief in God, pp. 69ff.

117. William Temple, in Contemporary British Phil., Vol. I, p. 415

118. See below, pp. 352ff. 119. The Spirit, p. 15

120. The Idea of God, p. 304; see also quotations above, p. 342-3



is held to be so indispensable to God, but rather some object of creative activity. In this and similar idealistic writings the phrase 'the world' in this reference should be replaced by 'a world', and the latter term should be understood in the general terms just suggested. But it must be confessed that Professor Pringle-Pattison's meaning, like that of a true Hegelian, is seldom clear on this point; constantly we are left under the impression that it is our world, indeed we ourselves, without whom God would not be God. In fact it is maintained that from all eternity there must have been not merely a 'world' but rational spirits like ourselves; and this inveterate Hegelian prepossession achieves the zenith of its absurdity when we are directed, not once but several times, to assume "such larger intelligences existing now in worlds beyond  
121  
our ken". Our own view may be summarised in two statements. While the conception of God's nature as inherently creative would suggest that he could hardly be without some object for his creative activity, it does not justify us in assuming that that object must be of such a character that the term 'world' would properly apply to it. And while there is no ground to deny the existence of conscious finite spirits elsewhere within the creation, there is not the slightest positive evidence for affirming their existence. It is pure guess-work. Here, if anywhere, we confront a departure from the empirical evidence to which Professor Pringle-Pattison is resolved to be faithful--one of those

illegitimate flights of speculative imagination which  
 he is elsewhere concerned to discourage <sup>122</sup>. The appropriate objective of theistic inquiry is to discover as much as may positively be known of the divine nature from the very meager evidence available to finite spirits. But when it is tempted to pass on to declare negations and limitations upon the divine possibilities--as that God could not exist without the world or without finite spirits--speculation is venturing into territory where it may well preserve a discreet silence.

This comment touches upon only one, though the principal, source of difficulty in Professor Pringle-Pattison's interpretation of 'transcendence'. That it is possible to develop a far more adequate doctrine of '~~transcendence~~' while fully conserving the 'immanental' interests so close to his concern is demonstrated in a statement by one of Professor Pringle-Pattison's pupils <sup>123</sup> to which reference may be strongly recommended.

The Absolute and

Finite Spirits.

3. So intricate and so important are the issues involved in the problem of the relations of finite spirits and the Absolute that it furnished the topic for a symposium of the Aristotelian Society in joint session with the British Psychological Society and the Mind Association in June 1918 <sup>124</sup>. The terms of the discussion were determined by certain passages in The Idea of God; and Professor Pringle-Pattison appeared as respondent to

Professor Bosanquet who opened the symposium. The various

<sup>122</sup>. The Idea of God, p.157, for example.

<sup>123</sup>. G.F. Barbour, The Ethical Approach to Theism, pp.83ff.

<sup>124</sup>. Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Vol. XVIII; reprinted as Life and Finite Individuality.



phases of the question are there given full treatment. To enter the problem with even a meager measure of thoroughness would carry us far beyond the scope of our study. Our judgment on Professor Pringle-Pattison's handling of it has been indicated in our conclusion on the larger issue. In portions of his discussion of the status of finite individuals their identity appears so completely merged in the all-engulfing reality of the Absolute that their freedom, elsewhere so carefully safeguarded, seems to be sacrificed. But this is not the prevailing impression made by his treatment; it is clear that his deeper concern is <sup>[to]</sup> preserve the identity of both God and man.

#### The Problem of Time.

4. It is increasingly recognised, I think, that the problem of time has become the central issue in contemporary philosophy.<sup>126</sup> Professor Pringle-Pattison<sup>127</sup> wrestles earnestly with it in a chapter considered by Professor Mackintosh possibly "the most masterly and sustained example of purely philosophical reasoning" his<sup>128</sup> Gifford Lectures contain. His conclusion, as we have noted, is the suggestion that the experience of the Absolute<sup>129</sup> "includes time but somehow transcends it". More specifically he proposes to displace the familiar three-dimensional view of time--as past, present and future--by the

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125. See quotations above, p. 343. Cp. Hegelianism & Personality pp. 215-221.

126. It is so regarded, for example, by Professor Whitehead.

127. "Time and Eternity", The Idea of God, Lecture XVIII, see summary above, pp.

128. Some Aspects of Christian Belief, p. 262.

129. The Idea of God, p. 347. See above, p.

conception of a single intuitive grasp of the span of time in which past, present and future are caught into an instantaneous whole. Time as it enters into the experience of the Absolute is, apparently, a one-dimensional eternal present. This is, I think we may say, the quite usual view not only of absolute idealists but among orthodox theists generally. It is closely akin to the conclusion to which Professor Sorley is led from quite different premisses.<sup>130</sup> Furthermore, as Professor Pringle-Pattison urges, there are certain not unfamiliar human experiences, in artistic appreciation and creative endeavor as well as in dreams and contemplation, in which a span of time is caught into an instantaneous experience, which seem to 'include time but somehow transcend it'. These experiences might promise a faint suggestion of what such an absolute experience might be like. In the face of so weighty a body of opinion, it may appear presumptuous to question the validity of this interpretation. But in the sequel we shall find it necessary to do so.<sup>131</sup> Suffice it here to urge that, so to conceive the divine knowledge, and to make earnest with the conception, is to negate the reality of human freedom. The difference between the human parallels of artistic or contemplative comprehension and the alleged divine foreknowledge is a crucial one--human insight is always of an artistic whole, or of past time, or of the future only as an imaginative forecast; but the assumed divine wisdom is foreknowledge--certainty of the future

130. Moral Values and the Idea of God, pp. 464ff. See above,

P. 145.

131. See below, p. 386.



behavior of supposedly free finite creatures. To be sure the dramatist envisions his play in its entirety including the words and actions of the actors; but the vindication of his foresight by the sequel hangs on the degree to which the actors are automata, reproducing his plan for them with meticulous accuracy. One bad actor spoils the play. And this mortal drama of ours is, unhappily, all too dotted with bad actors. A favorite escape from the dilemma is to suggest that a future which from our perspective is genuinely unpredictable is, from the greater perspective of the divine, clearly foreknown. But this is to apply to the divine perspective a capacity which we cannot conceive; and its final outcome is always to reduce human freedom to a mere appearance of phenomenal experience, without genuine reality.<sup>131a</sup> There seems no way for our feeble human powers of understanding to escape the conclusion:--if man be in limited measure the determiner of his own decisions and his own future so that his future is to him unpredictable, then that future must be thought of as <sup>(also)</sup> in some degree unknowable by the divine mind conceived as it lies within our power to imagine it. This is not to deny the possibility of divine foreknowledge; it is to deny the possibility of our conceiving it while still safeguarding our conviction of man's freedom. We may, if we choose, assert divine foreknowledge; but it is a formal and empty predicate without concrete meaning for us. It is an effort to interpret the nature of the divine in terms drawn from beyond the range of that which we have power to know, our own experience of reality; and

<sup>131a</sup>. On a further difficulty with this conception of time as it affects our thought of history, see H.R. Mackintosh, op.cit., pp. 270ff.

this is precisely the procedure which Professor Pringle-Pattison was determined to abjure.

We have suggested more than once that the weaknesses in Professor Pringle-Pattison's position spring from a too great servitude to a Hegelian type of absolutism. From another angle, they may be said to arise whenever he deserts his own fundamental principle of interpretation--the reading of the divine from the highest human experience. One flagrant instance of that departure occurs in his rejection of James' vigorous insistence that life is "a real fight in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success"<sup>132</sup>. He replies, "But can we hope to find in the characteristics of our own practical activity a description in ultimate terms of the fundamental nature of the universe?"<sup>133</sup> One would have thought that that was an accurate definition of his own method. Had he not said earlier, "In the conditions of the highest human life we have access, as nowhere else, to the inmost nature of the divine"<sup>134</sup>? And again, at the very end, "The revelation of the infinite in the finite is the eternal fact of the universe"<sup>135</sup>. It should be noted that in justification of his divergence from James, he makes his appeal to the confirming insight of religious experience. "The victory for which morality fights is for religion already, or rather eternally, won."<sup>136</sup> This may be, but it comes dangerously near a form of words without meaning. For ourselves, we

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132. William James, The Will To Believe, p.61

133. The Idea of God, p.395.

134. Op.cit., p.157.

135. Op.cit., p.414.

136. op.cit., p.396.



are inclined to regard his fundamental principle of interpretation which informs and inspires his whole work as the truer wisdom, and any departure from it as of doubtful validity.

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#### Summary.

But it would be most unfair to conclude our study of Professor Pringle-Pattison on a note so negative and critical. The aspects of his thought which we, following others, have felt obliged to criticise are, for the most part, subordinate strands. In each instance they are balanced by other and sounder insights. Reconciliation of the two strains of conviction is not always easy; sometimes it appears definitely impossible. But, where apparent inconsistency occurs, the strand of thought which has seemed to us the truer will always be discovered to take its place in an inclusive and coherent pattern. This larger pattern we would fain recognise as the substance of the writer's inmost certainty. For, in its entirety, it is one of the loftiest and most moving visions of God which it has been given to a modern mind to conceive.

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137. On this point, see the careful comparison of ultimately irreconcilable strains of thought on the relation of God and the Absolute, and on the problem of time in H.R. Mackintosh, Some Aspects of Christian Thought, pp. 263ff.

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PART THREE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION



CHAPTER EIGHTTOWARD A CONSTRUCTIVE THEISMThe Method of  
the Summary.

As we approach the task of final summary and conclusion, two alternative methods lie open for our choice. The first would again review the ground which has been surveyed, comparing and contrasting the views of the four contemporary thinkers who together with Kant have furnished the material of the enquiry, especially in the light of the four questions which have been used as loose connecting threads in our critical appraisal. From such a comparative review certain general conclusions might be expected to emerge. The alternative method would proceed at once to suggest the main lines of a constructive conclusion in which would be embodied our own response to the contrasted view-points discovered in the body of the paper. The second method has been selected as promising a less tedious reading and a more fruitful outcome. Our more important conclusions have already emerged in the course of the critical discussion; we may therefore present them here in summary outline, indicating points of contact with the theisms surveyed as we proceed.

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1. It had been originally intended to present a fairly full theistic argument at this point. Considerations of sequence as well as of length have counselled its omission in favour of this brief summary. The longer statement will appear in a small volume to be published in the autumn under the title -The Plain Man Seeks for God.

The outline which follows has not hesitated to incorporate certain sections from my own statements in the body of the thesis.

## II.

The Theistic  
Argument in  
Outline.

The Setting

Our interpretation of the setting of the contemporary theistic problem and our analysis of its causes coincide almost exactly with those of Professor Pringle-Pattison. We recognise the determinative influence of Kant upon all subsequent philosophical and theological development. And we trace the sterility and scepticism which have infected recent theology to his mistaken divorce of phenomenal experience from ultimate reality. In the period since Kant, his dualism has been increasingly reinterpreted as the contrast between a 'realm of facts' and a 'realm of values'. The reality of the first is certain; the reality of the second is matter of dispute. Concerning the 'realm of facts' science gives us truth; metaphysics and theology speculate concerning the hypothetical 'realm of values'. The findings of science have been conceded an increasing authority; the conclusions of philosophy and theology have been received with increasing scepticism. This scepticism has been heightened by a philosophy of science which, until very recent years, was at its worst materialistic, and at its best agnostic.<sup>1</sup>

The Interpre-  
tation of  
Nature

We follow Professor Pringle-Pattison also as to the first steps in the development of a constructive position.<sup>2</sup>

A way out of the dilemma just stated is to be found, in the -----

1. The foregoing analysis has been developed at greater length in Chapter One above; the fuller statement need not be repeated here.

2. The position here outlined so closely parallels



first instance, not by rejecting the findings of science but by subjecting them to a more acute analysis and then embodying them in a more valid interpretation. This interpretation will follow the lines of the theory of emergent or creative evolution. Nature presents us with a number of distinct types of reality. These types are seen to constitute a hierarchy of levels, forming an ascending scale in terms of increasing complexity and comprehensiveness and significance. Each higher level embraces the lower levels which antedate it in the cosmic history, from which it emerges, and upon which it is dependent for its existence. The lowest level known to us is that of the physical-chemical basis of matter, which materialism would make normative for its interpretation of reality as a whole. The highest level within our ken is that of a certain quality within human personality, which may be referred to as 'spirit', marked by a recognition of, a worship of, and a devotion to values --the quality which religion would make -----

that of Professor Pringle-Pattison that a natural inference would regard it as a reproduction of his. It seems only fair to state that, as far as I am aware, it has been reached on entirely independent grounds. I had read The Idea of God ten years ago but do not recall being impressed by its teaching on these points. Chapter One and Chapter Eight of this paper had been completed in preliminary draft before returning to Professor Pringle-Pattison's thought for intensive study. I have been amazed at the extent of coincidence between these conclusions and his. I had been led to this reading of the problem of contemporary theism by a critical examination of Kant, and of modern theology; and to this interpretation of science by a study of some of the eminent scientists, especially Professors Lloyd Morgan, Alexander, and J.S. Haldane.

normative for its interpretation of reality as a whole. The historic development of this hierarchy in the time-process appears to have traced a course exactly parallel to the normative scale of levels; level after level has emerged from or supervened upon those lower than itself in the scale. It has been a process marked throughout by twin features--continuity from lowest to highest and the emergence of genuinely new types of reality. It has been a process which has achieved its summit thus far in the most nearly perfect human spirit. Such an interpretation of Nature discovers evidence of the reality of God at two points. It points to an 'order' or 'structure' behind the space - time world as we know it, and to the interplay within that structure of unchanging 'laws' and ever-changing brute 'stuff' by which our living, growing universe is made possible; and it points to a developing process occurring within time through which ever higher and higher levels of reality are achieved - the process we call evolution. The underlying structure of Nature which has rendered such a world and such a process possible can be accounted for only as grounded in an ultimate Power and Mind. And the process itself, developing ever higher and more significant types of phenomenal existences, suggests the immanent realisation of the Purpose of its Ground. Further, it would seem reasonable to seek in the highest, the most climactic term of an advancing process clearest light on its immanent Purpose and the character of its Purposer.

This philosophy of Nature holds all of the facts



The Interpre-  
tation of  
Values

with which experience confronts us within its view; but it finally brings attention sharply to focus upon man's awareness of values as the supreme type of reality and therefore the best key to the meaning of the whole. Thus far our reasoning has closely paralleled that of Professor Pringle-Pattison. From this point the argument may well take the form of a philosophy of values. It should begin with a discrimination of the kinds of intrinsic value. Here we would concur with Professor Sorley in recognising the quasi-autonomy but final interrelatedness and harmony of the three classic forms of ultimate value--Truth, Goodness and Beauty. And in claiming for moral or ethical values a measure of primacy. But we would wish to modify Professor Sorley's statement by aiming to build the theistic argument from the experience not of moral values alone but of all three kinds of value. And a well-rounded treatment would need to face the further question of the status of the religious Object within the order of values. Is religious experience a fourth distinct type of value-experience to be differentiated from and classified as superior to the three recognised forms of value-experience, or is it merely a variant of the experience of truth, or of beauty, or of goodness? Our judgment favors the first of these alternatives, but we do not offer evidence in its support.

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3. In the theory of value, the two problems which seem most in need of further exploration at the present time concern (A) the relations and relative significance of the three traditional types of ultimate value; and (B) the status of religion within the experience of values. In (A) the principal question is, What is the character of the primacy of moral values over values of truth and beauty? The

The reasoning from the experience of values to God may well follow the course traced by Professor Sorley in his carefully and closely reasoned argument from moral values, supported by certain supplementary considerations urged by Professors Taylor and Pringle-Pattison. It will open with a vindication of the objectivity of values. Evidence in proof of their objectivity will be presented from three distinct but complementary sources - from the nature of values; from the implications of man's moral experience; and from the fact of a moral order.

1) The Nature  
of Values

(1) Judgments of value assume the objective reality of their objects. Every value-judgment claims objective validity independent of the judging subject; it always pertains not to a feeling or attitude of the subject, but to an actual fact about an object or an objective relationship. Further, the notion of value always refers to something which actually exists or ought to exist. Again value-judgments make their reference not to an abstract quality, but to a concrete expression of that quality; but while value is always discovered in the particular, the individual, yet <sup>it</sup> always implies a universal. Moreover, value judgments claim objective universality since they assume that 'all who judge correctly must

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best work on the problem has been done by John Laird in The Idea of Value and by W.M. Urban in The Intelligible World and in his article "Theory of Value" in Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th Edition, Vol. 22, pp. 961ff. (See also J.S. Mackenzie's admirable little book Ultimate Values, and his more recent Cosmic Problems; and W.G. Everett's Moral Values.) But no clear agreement has thus far been achieved and much fundamental work still awaits attention. With regard to (B), the main question is, Does religious experience apprehend a distinct type of value, or merely one or more of the familiar triad in a particular way? Put otherwise, is religion a unique form of value-experience, or simply intrinsic value-experience under a slightly modified perspective? No answer is here attempted.



'find the same value in any given situation'. Once more through their presence in the consciousness of persons and their influence upon persons, values are actually efficient factors in the existent world; and the ascription of value always implies a reference, more or less explicit, to personal activity as the originator and the appreciator of that which is valued. Finally, values involve an appeal to an assumed ideal Order of Values. No single good can be confidently determined except with reference to a Chief Good, an organic system of values, a realm of ends which shall embrace both general principles and concrete experiences, both the actual order and the ideal order, and unite them in a harmonious whole. Therefore every value-judgment carries reference to a Realm of Values which obviously does not possess full existence within the world as we know it and may never do so. It is an appeal to an assumed system of values.

It is thus apparent that values 'intend' reference to objective reality, to existent reality, and to personal agency. And they are related to reality in at least two ways; 1) they are vitally effective influences upon the actual lives of men and women who are themselves manifestations of reality within the time-process; and 2) they are not dependent for their validity upon residence within human minds but assume a Realm of Values which pertains not to the world as it actually is but rather to the world as it should be. Values, therefore, are constitutive at once of reality as an existing

system and of ultimate reality. Indeed they appear to be a point of contact between the world-process as we experience it and ultimate reality. They suggest a principle of interpretation for the relation between these two apparently disparate realms--the order of Nature and the order of Values.

Lastly, values come to man as though from a living objective reality, and with an imperative claim upon his affection, his loyalty, his allegiance, to which all that marks him as man makes instinctive response. Indeed in their more delicate manifestations, they seem to speak to him as though with the voice of a person--yes, a voice of Love.

- 2)  
The Moral  
Conscious-  
ness.
- (2) The consciousness of the categorical imperative, of the insistent claims of the moral law upon men's allegiance, is one of the most indisputable 'given' facts of human experience. A careful examination of this sense
- a) Conscience of 'oughtness' will reveal clearly that the ultimate ground of obligation cannot be located in any human considerations, even of the good of society. It is independent of all temporal consequences; it points to a supernatural sanction. Moreover it is always a sense of obligation not to a relative good but to an absolute good. That absolute good is but slowly revealed to us and apprehended by us as we grow in moral grace. It for ever stirs within us a restless dissatisfaction with whatever meagre moral achievement may be ours. And its recognised right to our worship as



well as to our obedience brings the added suggestion that the claim of the moral ideal upon us springs from a living and intelligent moral Will. On the other hand, we would not feel an adequate motivation to serve the moral law did it not speak to us with the voice of one who is Redeemer as well as Judge. And this 'intention of the soul' toward a Person rather than a law becomes most apparent in the consciousness of moral failure and guilt--precisely those characteristics of the moral life which most clearly distinguish man from the sub-human levels and mark him as man. For in its deepest and truest instinct, the sense of sin is always felt, not as the violation of a wise regulation, but as an offense against a supremely worshipful Person. Thus it is clear that the awareness of moral obligation in its various aspects presupposes not merely an objective sanction, but a personal spiritual Source.

b) Aspiration.

But conscience represents only one side of our moral experience; there is a positive obverse of the sense of moral obligation. Our moral aspirations are forever pointing us beyond any goal achievable within human experience; they seem to be directed toward an immortal and eternal good. Indeed it is a characteristic of the moral life that, while it develops within the flux of temporal events, it is dependent for its fulfillment upon a perfect and absolute good which is never to be found within the time sequence. It is marked by a restlessness, an unsatisfied idealism, an inherent 'nostalgia for a Beyond'. Now, man would never aspire to an ideal quite

beyond his reach had he not been touched by that ideal in very fact, in actuality. His aspiration is response to such an initiative from the side of the ideal. Moreover he sees that ideal as in some sense part of himself, but of his potential self--of himself as he may become. Here we confront God both immanent and transcendent--immanent as the ideal already in some measure within the human self, transcendent as the ideal forever beyond the realisation of the self and summoning it to ever higher endeavour.

Thus we see that, in its every aspect, the moral consciousness points beyond itself to a supernatural objective reality as the grounds of its sanction and the guarantor of its fulfilment. In its rich and manifold nature it has been discovered to be one of the indisputable facts of life. As such, we must conceive it to have a cause adequate to its richest expression. On no account can the rise, the astounding development and the mature flowering of man's moral nature be explained in terms of 'natural selection' or some other purely naturalistic instrumentality. It must have developed under the influence of a power not less but greater than itself, an infinite moral will, i.e., God. We are therefore pointed to the conclusion that the various features of moral experience suggested owe their existence to the impact of a transcendent ground of absolute and perfect value which has caused them; <sup>that</sup> and they are justified in



the expectation of an eternal continuance in which aspiration after the ideal may achieve its goal, the yet unattained be realised, and the deepest yearnings of the soul find their appointed home and their perfect companionship.

3) The Moral  
Order.

(3) The facts of the individual moral consciousness, important as they are, are not the only data of a distinctively moral kind which warrant metaphysical conclusions. We have at our disposal evidence of a far more objective and empirical character. Conscience believes itself commanded by an ultimate moral law. But that law finds concrete embodiment in fact, in the structure of the world itself which surrounds human life and forever reminds it of the essentially moral framework within which it is set. 'Virtue does not always meet with its due reward, nor vice with its due punishment in any obvious outward shape....But internal moral laws<sup>3a</sup> of an essentially retributive nature are <sup>in</sup>incessant operation'; and they show all too clearly what is the judgment of the universe on both character and conduct. For individual, for nation, and for race, the wages of sin is death. As we suggest a little later, human freedom to follow the dictates of desire is real, but it moves within fixed and rigorous limits which represent the moral structure of the universe. A too great disregard of that structure brings its inevitable penalty.

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3a. Robert Flint, Theism, pp. 227-229.

Likewise history as well as personal experience affords abundant evidence of the reality of the moral law. 'The laws of morality are conditions of the progress, and even of the existence, of society.... If we examine history as a whole we cannot but recognise that it has been in the main a process of moral progress, of moral growth.... Our race does on the whole advance in the path towards good.... The testimony which moral progress involves as to the moral character of God is certain'.<sup>3b</sup> Thus we are led to recognise two indications of the objective character of the moral order--the chastening and moralising influence of the world upon personal character<sup>3c</sup> and the evidence of moral advance in world history.'

The Status of  
Values in the  
World-Process.

And we are also brought to another, and to us the most important, evidence of the objective status of values--namely, their appearance at the highest level of a continuous but hierarchical cosmic development. Further they appear there not simply as isolated values but as constituting a system or order or realm of values. Therefore the 'realm of values' is organic to, and the climax of, a cosmic process which has its structural base in the material order of the 'realm of facts'. Thus the organic interrelatedness and true relevance of the two orders which Kant and his successors sought to sever from each other is discovered. And, if the cosmic process as a whole be regarded as objective, then objectivity must be predicated of those factors in which the process culminates.<sup>3b</sup> Op. cit., pp. 229-232.  
<sup>3c</sup> The foregoing argument for the objectivity of Values is largely a condensed summary of earlier sections.



Moreover, if it is sound procedure to seek the key to the cosmic history in its highest emergent term, then the Reality which is the ground and source of the history should be pictured in terms of the supreme values--as the Constitutor of truth, the Guardian of goodness, and the altogether lovely One.

The Conception of  
God Suggested  
By Values.

From these conclusions the conception of God may be more specifically developed. Values point to a Being whose nature is personal, whose purpose is two-fold--the perfecting of individual human personality, and the gradual realisation on earth of a perfect Realm of Values--, who is truly represented as standing at the door of human life knocking, calling men to make the supreme values their concern and their delight, and to take his purposes as their own and so to become fellow creators with him of a Commonwealth of Love. He is to be thought of as a person, because it is only to and in and through persons that values have reality within our world. He is to be thought of as the Sharer of our hopes, and our ideals and the Participant in our life's struggle, because it is through our world's travail that his Purpose is achieving fulfilment, and it is toward a commonwealth of incarnate ideals and perfected hopes that that purpose forever reaches. He is to be thought of as a Spirit of Love, because it is in love that ideals and values best make their appeal to our human spirits, it is by the persuasion of love that they win their triumph over

laziness and cowardice in men's hearts, it is to love alone that the human spirit makes its supreme dedication and through the response of love that it finds a final fulfilment. He is to be thought of as the supreme Sacrificant, because it is through no aloof perfection that values achieve their incarnation in our world's life, but through pain and loss unmerited and unexpected; and it is through these that failure is made good, disgrace redeemed and wrong atoned. It is only in the comradeship of vicarious devotion and ingratitude for vicarious sacrifice that the promise and hope and purpose of God within us may be made perfect.

#### An Alternative Approach.

To this point the argument has been inductive in character; we have tried whether by searching we might find out God. And it has sought to press its way along a single line of advance; we have followed Professor Pringle-Pattison in tracing a course through Nature to values, and then Professor Sorley in a further step from values to God. But we must now meet a two-fold query which comes to us from the thought of Professor Taylor or, more accurately from that of the late Baron Von Hügel through Professor Taylor. We have repeatedly urged that the inductive type of argument as employed by Nineteenth Century apologists failed, partly because it seldom carried men through to a living experience of God, but principally because it approached the whole task of apologetics wrong-end-to. It assumed the perspective of an earnest intellectual inquirer



seeking to reassure his mind of the validity of a hypothesis. As we have said earlier, "God becomes the last term of an arduous and technical intellectual inquiry<sup>4</sup> instead of the first fact of a vital religious experience." We must now face the question whether our own procedure, pursued in deference to prevailing canons of thought, has not been ill-chosen.

But further reflection will indicate, I think, that the conception of reality which we have attributed to Professor Taylor is essentially harmonious with that of our own conclusion thus far, except that it is held from a different and truer perspective. We have conducted an inductive argument from our familiar experience of the phenomneal world through our more obscure but <sup>more</sup> significant experiences of value to the reality of God; but the argument has concluded with a conception of a realm of transcendent and eternal values. The alternative view would, so to speak, pursue the enquiry the other end to. As we have said earlier, "It is the initial assumption of that perspective that in man's every contact with reality, whether with Nature through sense-experience or with beauty through appreciation or with a divine Comforter through personal communion, he is in immediate contact with the Supernatural, with the living and active God. To put the matter more accurately, it is assumed that man's

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4. See above - page 7.

"awareness of reality and his desire to comprehend it is interpretable only as his response to the prior movement of the living divine spirit upon him....The first datum of all reflection as it is assuredly the first fact of all experience is the indubitable existence of that most certainly real, most incomprehensibly mysterious, most persistently alluring Reality which is the prius of all knowledge as of all human existence. The achievement of knowledge becomes the painstaking, ever baffled but ever persistent, ever incomplete but ever more nearly complete, <sup>4a</sup> effort to discern and define the features of that Reality? If the two views are put together, it will be seen that the final outcome of our enquiry is the recognition of a double fact- a transcendent and eternal Reality whose nature is glimpsed through the Order of Values and who is at once the primal fact in the universe and the prior ground of all our experience; and a cosmic process developing within the time-order toward a final consummation which would be, in effect, the reproduction of the eternal order of values within the temporal world. In brief we have been brought face to face with the reality of the transcendent God, and the immanent out-working of his purpose within history.

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4a. See above, pp. 225-6.



The Divine  
Constraint.

But it is well, before leaving this point, to re-emphasise once more the practical limitations of the inductive approach. It is not thus that the spiritual pathfinders of mankind and the race itself in the periods of its highest illumination have become certain of God. Certainty of God has been not so much a conclusion of a chain of reasoning as an awakening to the deeper significance of familiar experience. Its mood has been not inquiry, but receptivity. Its outcome has been not a discovery by the mind but rather the obeisance of the whole spirit. Further, the avenues of commerce between the divine and ourselves are not one, but many. More important, the traffic of those avenues moves less as an upward yearning toward an obscure and impassive goal, than as the encompassing constraint of a freely given Presence. God touches our lives through Nature in sense-experience--as Order, as Law, as Power, as Mind, as Purpose. God touches our lives through every variant of the experience of the highest--through the structure of truth as Fidelity, through the gift of beauty as Loveliness, through the ideal of purity as Holiness, through the claim of the right as Excellence, through the grace of human comradeship as Love. And God touches our lives more immediately, more imperiously, more intimately through personal

commerce--as Companion and as Critic and as Deliverer. It is not by seeking that we find out God, but in living that we are found of him. Certainty of God is less the achieving of a conviction of the divine, than a welcome of the coercion of the divine.<sup>4b</sup>

## The Bafflement of Evil.

Finally we recognise that this certainty, even when it is truly come by, is held in the teeth of often almost overpowering difficulty. We confront the bafflement of evil. Here our thought makes contact with that of Professor Baillie. We cannot agree with him that religious faith arises primarily, or even characteristically, in harrowing perplexity or of the frustration of life's hopes. We return again to the testimony from religion in childhood, the childhood of the race and of the individual. And we must insist that to the mature soul as well the divine may come through every avenue of high experience, no less through fulfilment than through defeat, no less in laughter than in struggle. But we do agree with Professor Baillie that religious faith maintains itself most triumphantly in the face of adversity.

We believe that reflection may cast much light on the problem of evil, showing that the greater portion of it is due directly or indirectly to man's failure somewhere, but there will always remain an

<sup>4b.</sup> In this connection, see Professor H.H. Farmer's admirable little book, Experience of God, espec. Chapter 2.



unexplained residuum to baffle the minds and harrow the souls of the more sensitive spirits. For that reason we here venture no justification of the fact of evil, but pass at once to confront what we believe to be the heart of the problem.

As we contemplate evil and seek to understand it, we are immediately arrested by a two-fold paradox which stands at the very heart of the problem; it is these paradoxes which constitute the most significant facts about evil. First, while reflection can explain in general terms the presence of evil, pointing to its inevitability in a world where the triumph of good waits upon the free devotion of men, it can never justify the incidence of evil upon individual lives, showing why this and that person should endure undeserved tragedy; but--it is precisely in the individual life and nowhere else that evil exists as a living problem, not of speculation but of intense personal experience. Reflection fails just where it is most needed. Second, it is the facts of evil which create faith's most harrowing difficulties; but--it is precisely in circumstances of unreasonable adversity when reflection is of least avail that faith rises in supreme triumph. When faith should be put to confusion, then is it most secure. It is the extraordinary character of these paradoxes which

lends weight to Professor Baillie's interpretation of religion wholly in terms of faith's defiance of Nature and of fate. For it is in the throes of these paradoxes that religion most characteristically defies logic and cowardice and caution with its cry, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him!" For this reason the evidence here has unique importance. And the witness of that evidence is that, in the hour when the soul finds itself most oppressed by life's injustice or mankind's cruelty or fate's frustration, it finds strength given to it from a Companionship which does not explain but confirms. Then is it most sure of God. Here is the ever-present reminder that religious faith, if not irrational, is inherently more-than-rational. For its most persuasive commendation to those who have never experienced it, religion relies upon the witness of the inner life of those who in its strength have triumphed. But for the ultimate interior confirmation which alone can render its certainties fully secure, religion must wait upon each man's venture of faith through which the Eternal Presence may make itself real to his soul.



## III.

Implications of  
The Conception  
of God.

What further implications follow from the conception of God in which such an interpretation would issue ?, it may be asked. Here we may indicate our conclusions in a series of propositions, bearing in mind especially the perplexities in the ordinary layman's thought of God which furnished the burden of our concern in the opening chapter.

Different  
Levels of  
Reality.

1. Of first importance is the recognition that, just as we think of the Reality made known to us in our rich varied human experience in terms of levels or types of reality, so the relationship of God to each type and to us through each type must be conceived differently. Reality as we know it is a unity, but it is not all of a piece. Moreover we meet not simply two sharply contrasted types of

5. See, especially, pp. 2-14.

In this and the preceding sections, the sources which have been most heavily drawn upon, in addition to the works examined above, have been:-

In the Interpretation of Nature--the writings of Profs. Thomson, Whitehead, Eddington, Jeans, Lloyd Morgan, Haldane, and Alexander, especially C. Lloyd Morgan, Emergent Evolution and Life, Mind and Spirit; and J.S. Haldane, The Sciences and Philosophy. Also B.H. Streeter, Reality; and C.E. Raven, The Creator Spirit.

In the Interpretation of Values--the writings of Prof. W.E. Hocking and the books listed on p. 362n.

On the conception of The Divine Constraint--the writings of the late Baron Von Hugel; of Prof. H.R. Mackintosh; and H.H. Farmer, Experience of God.

On the conception of God--W.R. Matthews, God in Christian Thought and Experience, especially. Also W.A. Brown, Beliefs That Matter, etc.

See fuller bibliographical references at end of chapter.

reality, as in the familiar dualisms of matter and mind, or of facts and values. Reality presents itself to us in experience in a number of different forms, each exhibiting distinctive characteristics, no one fully resolvable into any of the others; these different forms may be viewed as a graded hierarchy of ascending complexity and significance. This is the pith of the doctrine of levels or emergent evolution. And, just as we change our practice when the type of reality with which we are dealing changes, so should we change our thought of God in his relationship to different orders of reality. It is as false to reduce God's ways of dealing with his creation to a single uniform principle as it is to try to reduce the rich stuff of that creation to a single basic factor. This conclusion should be our first guide in our thought of God.

Observe how the recognition of this principle will affect our attitude on the difficult problems of prayer. (And we have agreed, be it remembered, that 'men's working belief in prayer is, generally speaking, the most sensitive touchstone of vital personal religion'.<sup>6</sup>) What may be expected from God through prayer will be determined in part by the type of reality with which our prayers are concerned. I should expect God to act toward and through the phenomena of matter according to the dependable and uniform laws of the material realm and within the limitations implicit in a fixed and immutable order. But I should expect him to deal with and through bodies in terms of the living, growing, variable, organic structures which distinguish life.

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6. See above, p. 4.



And I should expect his traffic with human minds to proceed after the manner of those far more delicate and unanalysable ways by which one human spirit communicates with and influences another. In response to my prayer, I should not expect God to mend a broken table as he might heal a broken limb. And I should not expect him to stop bacilli from spreading disease as I should hope he might influence men from spreading the plague of war. If I jump from a window I should hardly expect him to suspend the law of gravitation in my behalf, however imperious my petition. But, if I am ill, I might not be deceived in the hope that he would bring powers of healing not fully available through my own body's strength or the skill of others. If I seek light on a puzzling decision, or truth in a difficult problem, or courage for a tedious task, am I altogether mistaken in the hope that he might bring the needed aid--at least along the lines and to the degree which might be expected from a wise and kindly human comrade? And, when my prayer moves on to those yet higher levels where its desire is no longer for things of for specific gifts of strength but rather for those fuller and more ultimate communions for which every spirit in its higher aspiration longs, shall I not expect that there may come a gift of comradeship as certain, as ennobling, as satisfying as human fellowships at their richest may offer--and more, in the ratio of God's love to a friend's love?

We are traversing admittedly precarious ground; no two minds will find easy agreement. Our concern is not to define prayer and its possibilities; but rather to hint at

limits within which our practice of prayer might well move--to be tried and tested, verified or rejected. The burden of our thought is two-fold. It is to urge that the use of prayer in recent years has been strangled by the fact that, in the practical faith of the plain man of today, his thought of God is likely to be controlled by concepts of law taken over bodily from the physical sciences. The concept of law is sound within its proper sphere but it is quite inadequate, both intellectually and practically, to suggest God's relation to human life. It is inadequate intellectually because it conceives the working of God's spirit in terms drawn from the lower rather than the higher levels of experienced reality, on the analogy of the relation of matter to matter rather than the relation of life with life and spirit with spirit. It is inadequate practically because living religion requires that man's fellowship with God shall be as free, as personal, as intimate, as his comradeship with the best of men--and far more. In our thought of God's relation to us, concepts of law need to be replaced by concepts of personal fellowship, concepts of friendship. Friendship has its laws or principles as surely as do atoms and ether, but they are of an utterly different kind. The man who sought to come to know a friend as he seeks to establish effective relation to the law of gravitation will not advance far beyond the threshold of acquaintance. This is the positive burden of our thought--to urge that, whenever our thought turns to God in his relation to our minds and spirits, we must train ourselves to think of



him in the confidences, the intimacies, the expectations of personal comradeship. For the recovery of the conviction of a living God depends in no small measure upon an increasing control of our idea of God by concepts of personal relationship and upon a further exploration, in both thought and experience, of what it means to call God "Father". We are thus brought to a second guiding principle.

God as Personal.

2. In his relations with the realm of values or the level of 'spirit', God should be thought of as personal. With the single exception of the beauty of Nature, we know no values save as they are recognised by persons and as they are themselves the expression of the life and vision and intent of persons. To say that a thing has worth is to say that someone has valued it; it requires a mind sensitive to delicate meanings to place a valuation upon it. And, with the one exception just noted, it is also to imply that its worth proceeds from the creative effort of someone; it represents the concern of a sensitive spirit. Then, the Source and Purposer of the cosmic process in which our values appear must be thought of as personal.

So to conceive of God is at once to court the charge of anthropomorphism. We do so deliberately and without apology.<sup>6a</sup> For there are two quite different meanings of anthropomorphism. Finding certain features always characteristic of human life at its highest we may conclude,

"God must be at least like that", and ascribe the same attributes to him in higher measure. This is, quite literally,

<sup>6a</sup> I am glad to see that Professors Sorley, Taylor and Pringle-Pattison all vigorously defend the inevitability and legitimacy of anthropomorphism in the idea of God.

to fashion God after man's image; it is not an altogether illegitimate procedure, but it is not what we have in mind. On the other hand, discovering in our experience of the reality behind our world certain qualities akin to those invariably associated with persons (such as solicitude for the triumph of values), we may think of that reality in concepts drawn from personality, as the least inadequate concepts thought can conceive. This is legitimate, indeed inevitable, anthropomorphism. It amounts to little more than a recognition that, since man is human, all his concepts must be taken from human experience. In fact, the plain man's mind, untrammelled by sophistication, finds little difficulty in this procedure.

"The ordinary man, when asked if he believed that God was personal, would probably reply that he could not see why anyone should trouble themselves about an impersonal Deity, but would immediately go on to qualify his answer by saying that, of course, God cannot be personal in precisely the same sense as we are personal.... We shall find reason to believe that the plain man is right in this question of the divine personality. His conviction that God must be personal is based upon his own religious life and what he has gathered of the religious experience of others; but his suspicion that God must be personal in a mode different from that of human personality is also based partly on some moments of religious feeling as well as the vague reflection that the divine nature must be very different from ours." 8

Here is indicated not only the inevitability and propriety of anthropomorphism, but the way in which it should be guarded and corrected. We are right in thinking of God as personal; but we should never forget that he is very much more than personal and, in certain aspects, something very unlike a person. Our thought of God as Comrade,

7. "It is sufficiently evident that he who seeks to employ categories or ideals which are not human must first cease to be a man." W.R. Matthews, God in Christian Thought and Experience, p. 12.

8. Op.cit., p. 159.



Guide, Helper, Father, One who may be known somewhat after the manner of our knowledge of a friend, needs ever to be supplemented by the reminder that, in some sense, we can never know him. The God of personal fellowship is also the God of the universe, of the immensities and the eternities. He who is 'closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet' is also the Wholly Other, he whom no concepts can portray and no human reach grasp. I suggest that in the truest religious experience, one's thought moves constantly between these two poles by a process of alternation. And the recognition of the double character of our experience of reality as an experience of Nature and of values aids our imaginations in keeping flexible and our thought balanced and rounded. No one who comprehends the dimensions of his cosmic home will be too easily familiar with its Author and Sustainer. No one who lives deeply amid the riches of life's experiences and accepts their fullest impress upon him will doubt that God is also in some grand sense akin to himself. The solution of the dilemma would seem to come just here--when thinking of God in relation to his cosmos, be careful to recall the mystery, the incomprehensibility, the impersonality of God; when thinking of God in his traffic with human life and those things which human life holds most dear, be bold to call him "Father" and to fill the soul with all the meaning which that suggests.

To summarise our conclusions in this matter, God is to be thought of as personal, not because that is a wholly accurate and certainly not an adequate designation, but

because it is truer than any other thought can provide and therefore better than any alternative designation which might be proposed. To paraphrase another, "If we err in speaking of God as personal, we err not that we say too much but that we say too little; and if we err in calling him 'Father', we judge that we err less grievously than if we called him anything else."

### The Divine

### Self-limitation.

3. We must accept the implications of such a conception fearlessly. This Christian theology has usually been unwilling to do. With one breath it has affirmed human freedom, but with the next the unqualified omnipotence of God and the invariable triumph of his will. It has declared that man's struggles to create a more noble life are real--not an automaton's enactment of a predetermined role--and our world's advance still to some degree in the making; but that God knows all which shall happen. It has sometimes held that God is desperately solicitous for the triumph of his Kingdom; but that it is unthinkable that he should experience suffering. Now, to the plain man all this is quite incomprehensible. He knows nothing of genuinely free persons who fulfill a predetermined plan; or of the achievement of a future which is already foreknown; or of genuine concern without inescapable suffering. The plain man is right once more. To employ a very homely metaphor, it is true in matters of thought as in practical life that one cannot have one's cake and eat it too.<sup>8a</sup> Our inability to see through the familiar dilemmas of theology may be attributed to the

<sup>8a</sup> I am especially glad to have the support of Dean W.R. Matthews at this point. See God in Christian Thought and Experience, pp. 236-245.



inherent limitations of a finite perspective; but here, as in ascribing personality to God, we must accept those limitations gladly. If we are to think at all, we must employ the limited powers which have been given us; and if we are to think usefully we must think definitely, not Jesuitically with simultaneous affirmation of two irreconcilable statements. This means that we must think of the realisation of the divine purpose as limited, and in at least three ways.

a. First and most obviously, by the fundamental structure of Nature, the fixed background of our human drama. To be sure Nature should be thought of as God's creation and so embraced within his wider purpose. But it is not a perfect creation in any obvious sense. It does not mete out evenhanded justice; the incidence of its favours and its hardships bears no relation to divine approval or divine discipline. To be sure that is precisely the kind of setting for human life which we would desire. In the words of two of the writers of our study:-

"Are we justified in saying that the imperfect and puzzling world that surrounds us is an unfit medium for the moral life--if by the moral life we mean the triumph of spirit?" 9

"Nature on the large scale of history may be regarded as the instrument of man's moral and intellectual education; but that does not mean that we are bound to take each of nature's happenings as the exponent of a particular moral purpose. Contingency is written across the face of Nature.... Just such a world is better fitted to be a nurse of what is greatest in human character <sup>10</sup> than any carefully adjusted scheme of moral discipline".

But this means that the realisation of God's ultimate purpose for the world moves within limitations in Nature not always immediately favorable to that purpose.

9. Sorley, Moral Values and the Idea of God, p.346.

10. Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God, p.415.

b. Secondly, it is necessary to think of the divine purpose as definitely limited by the reality of human freedom. There is no way of escape from this conclusion. If freedom means anything beyond a phenomenal appearance which is really a cruel deception of man, it means genuine power to turn the course of events, to thwart the ideal outcome. There is not implied a final thwarting of the divine intention; we would wish to maintain that human freedom is real but that it moves within very definite limitations which represent God's will for the world. For individual and race alike the wages of sin is death. A too wilfull wandering from the summons of the higher way brings destruction. The offender, whether individual or nation or civilisation, is swept aside; the current of the larger purpose of God in which he would not join sweeps past and on to its ultimate fulfillment. But in the personal life and in the events of the cosmic drama here and now, God's power must be thought of as limited in some measure by man's power to choose. It is not without significance that the figure for the divine upon which recent thought rests more happily than upon any other is that of One who stands at the door of human life and knocks, but who declines to force an entrance.

c. And, by the same token, God must be thought of as limited not merely in the immediate realisation of his purposes but also in his knowledge of the future. As we have said earlier, 'If man be even in limited measure the maker of his own decisions and the determiner of his own destiny so that his future is from the human perspective unpre-  
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ll. So, for example, Sorley and Pringle-Pattison. Above, pp.



dictable, then that future must be thought of as also in some degree unknowable by the divine mind conceived as it lies within our power to imagine it<sup>12</sup>. For him only less than for us, the future is still partially in the making. Here again it may be held that the ultimate destinies are predetermined and foreknown; but if human freedom be real and our human travail not a farce, God does not foresee every turn of the path ahead. The figure of a master chess-player has been suggested. From a greater knowledge of the game and all possible moves, he is assured of final victory over the novice; but he cannot foresee what every move will be. The figure is not altogether happy, for it suggests competition and the artifice of opposed wills. But it may give a hint of the way in which the ultimate control of God over the destiny of the world may be reconcilable with the reality of human liberty. And, if there be any wisdom in the analogy, it is perhaps worth pointing out that the more inexpert the novice, the more unpredictable are his individual choices; although, by the same token, the more sure the final victory of the greater wisdom.

In the same way, a God who is personal and sharer in our hopes and aspirations must also be a participant in the experience of suffering. And surely a religion whose supreme symbol is a figure on a cross has deserted its central insight if it refuse to assert the suffering of God.<sup>13</sup>

The Significance  
of Jesus.

4. The particular theistic approach which we have proposed involves one other corrolary. It suggests where

12. See above, p. 354.

13. This is a serious weakness in the thought of Von Hugel.

to seek the most important insights as to God's nature. If the world-process is to be thought of as a single organic cosmic structure progressively realising an immanent divine Purpose, then it is in the factor most transcendently emergent from the process--it is there and there alone that that one would expect to find fullest light on its Source and Purposer. At the top rather than at the bottom or somewhere along the path of ascent, in the highest rather than in the lowest, through the culmination rather than through the primitive constituents, is disclosed the truest representation of the Creator of the whole. Within our ken, <sup>14</sup> than means man; among men, it means the best of men. It is these considerations which vindicate religion's unfailing concentration upon the value-elements in human experience; and not merely upon them, but upon our experience of values as it comes to its richest and most personal fruition in the intimacies of spiritual fellowship. Here is further justification for thinking of God as personal, for receiving with special authority the witness of religious communion, and for picturing the outlines of the Divine Countenance through its mirrorings in the features of the noblest human life. God has not revealed himself solely through our humanity, but he has revealed himself there supremely; God is not to be known solely through Jesus of Nazareth, but he may be discovered there preeminently. Here is philosophical reason why we may believe that in that single human Figure is disclosed to us the supreme portrait

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14. An interesting development of this point of view will be found in D. Miall Edwards' contribution to the symposium, The Lord of Life, on a christology for today.



of the Eternal God. And in the practical embracing of this philosophical truth is our safeguard against the sterility of an impersonal religion as well as our way of entrance into true religion's holy of holies.

From this dilemma of pagan thought, this poison of faith, Man-soul made glad escape in the worship of Christ; for his humanity is God's Personality, and communion with him is the life of the soul.

.....

Our happiest earthly comradeships hold a foretaste of the feast of salvation and by thatt virtue in them provoke desire beyond them to out-reach and surmount their humanity in some superhumanity and ultimat perfection: which, howe'er 'tis found or strangely imagin'd, answereth to the need of each and pulleth him instinctively as to a final cause. Thus unto all who hav found their high ideal in Chxist, Christ is to them the essence discern'd or undiscern'd of all their human friendships; and each lover of him and of his beauty must be as a bud on the Vine and hav participation in him; for Goddes love is unescapable as nature's environment, which if a man ignore or think to thrust it off he is the ill-natured fool that runneth blindly on death.

.....

This is thatt excelent way whereon if we wil walk red all things shall be added unto us--that Love which inspi the wayward Visionary in his doctrinal ode to the three christian Graces, the Church's first hymn and only deathless athanasian creed,--the which 'except a man believe he cannot be saved'.

.....

And in the fellowship of the friendship of Christ God is seen as the very self-essence of love, Creator and mover of all as activ Lover of all. (15)

The Self-reveal-  
ing and the  
Redeeming God.

5. The God to whom our thought has been led is inevitably one who is continuously self-revealing, and not alone or even primarily to man's intellect but rather to his whole nature. As we have already suggested, "The hold which value in each of its forms (and, supremely, as love) takes upon our life, prompting us to seek to find it, to understand it, to create it, to possess it, to be fully possessed by it--this 'grip' of value upon our deepest selves is itself the

15. Robert Bridges, The Testament of Beauty, Part IV, the end.

390.

touch of the Living God upon our lives. We would not seek him if we had not already known him." <sup>16</sup>

But he is more than self-revealing. The purpose of God has as one of its objects--its supreme object, as far as we know--the winning of men to their high vocation and only true destiny, the sharing with God in the creation of a finer world-life. Thus, God is man's redeemer, the Winner of men from futility to destiny, from isolation to strong comradeship in high endeavor. And so he is most truly represented. The method of his redemption is the influence of unwearying love making its way within the limitations of man's freedom. He is one who forever stands at the door and knocks. He does not force entrance, but he does knock. And where admission is freely offered, he enters to redeem.

So religion finds God to be. For the experience of religion is the response of one who feels himself called and persuaded and compelled by a Personality of Love--by one from whom all that is best within him comes, to whom his purest longings reach forth for reassurance and for communion, by whom he is changed into something of the likeness of that Love. The study of Nature pictures God as Creator; but the insight derived through our own inner experience of values portrays God as Redeemer. "For a metaphysic which has emancipated itself from physical categories, the ultimate conception of God is not that of a preexistent Creator but, as it is for religion, that of the Eternal Redeemer of the world." <sup>17</sup>

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16. See above, p. 90 and p. 173.

17. A.S. Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God, p. 412.



The Moral Pre-  
requisite of  
Faith.

6. One further word remains to be added. But to us it seems to be the most important word by far. We began our study by pointing out that the inadequacy of the contemporary layman's religion has a two-fold rootage--in a false philosophy, and in a kind of personal and corporate life which has lulled men into an indifference to religion and to the values and responsibilities implicit in it.<sup>18</sup> Our enquiry has been directed almost entirely to the intellectual problem. But here at the end we are again brought sharply back to the practical roots of unbelief--the effect of moral indifference upon religious faith.

Our thought has found a center of reference in the conception of a world-process. But it is a process which, like the human agents to whom it gives birth, is characterised by vitality, movement, struggle, above all the striving toward progress. It is a process in which great stakes are always at issue and supreme values forever imperilled--honesty, justice, freedom, opportunity, love, progress itself--all those things of highest worth which man at his best holds dear. Such a living, throbbing, endangered locus of values is a world in which the attitude of casual indifference can have no place;<sup>19</sup> it is equivalent to enmity to the highest. If this be a true reading of the matter, there are involved important implications about the Source and Ground of that world and about the way by which men may become sure of him.

It is not essentially a mystery to be solved, this world of ours, but a task to be undertaken and shared. The

18. See above, pp. 14ff.

19. See "Moral Earnestness", Cht. VI in In Quest of Life's Meaning.

Power behind it is properly conceived as a Thinker, but not primarily as a Thinker; primarily he is a Creator, a Do-er. The God whose very nature it is to love all mankind--great and low, wise and simple--and to win them into comradeship with himself and partnership in his high concerns cannot have made the intellect the principal pathway to himself, or truth the prerogative of the intelligent. He must be immediately and surely discoverable through all of man's experience, or more accurately through that part of his experience which is man at his best. The principal pathway to God, then, must be through a life--a full, rich, creative and dedicated life. And the way to the fullest understanding of God is through creative effort.

We may go one further step. If our idea of God be sound, a God who summons men to join with him in the perfecting of a fairer world, then only those who respond to that summons and are themselves participants in the creative task can be certain of God or comprehend him at all truly. For God is not a problem to be solved, but a Toiler to be joined. Knowledge of God is not a conclusion of the intellect, but the attunement of the spirit. This is the truth in Jesus' great word, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God"--an intuition of spiritual vision for which we now find philosophic confirmation. "For whatever else he may be, God is supremely a working God; that is what is meant by a living God. Further, it is a nature of Love which we have discovered him to be, and love is never indifferent; it cares and cares enormously. He is desperately in earnest about life and about the transformation



of our world-life. Where shall we most surely find him save in his workshop, in the toil and struggle of making this world into the image of his Kingdom? So many and many a modern man and woman have found him.....--wherever one can be sure the concern of God is enlisted, and feel the press of the hand of God with his own, the mingling of the tears of God in his sympathy, the joining of the exultation of God to his victory. Fellowship with God, then, is not a social relationship to be enjoyed mutually, but a great task to be undertaken unitedly. It is an experience of partnership. I suspect this is what Jesus meant when he said, "Take my yoke upon you." Take upon your shoulder some part of the burden under which his shoulder ceaselessly toils and you will find him as the Great Companion of life."<sup>20</sup> The final emphasis falls upon the embodiment of his love in the actual world-process, upon the divine purpose; and upon the necessity for human enlistment in that purpose.<sup>21</sup>

It is for that reason that the silent evidence of one human life may give clearer knowledge of truth than the speculations of the philosophers. 'The saint is the soundest theologian.' And it is for that reason, supremely, that the life and thought and work and death and continuing influence of Jesus of Nazareth may well be our surest guide to our certainty of God and the way for our own lives. "He that hath seen him hath seen the father." This has been the conviction of the greatest religious spirits down the centuries--that the way to the knowledge of God and the understanding of life was not

20. From my In Quest of Life's Meaning, pp. 86, 87.

21. We have used these phrases in summarising Prof. Sorley's conclusions.

through the brilliance of one's mind, but through the quality of one's life and the depth of one's devotion. We see why it must be true, that "He who wills to do God's will shall know."

And may it not be that in our own day the rebirth of vital religion for which we yearn waits until faith and courage lead forth the way to fresh discoveries? Then, as always, shall theology follow, with lagging footsteps.



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